

The Gramophone

Edited by COMPTON MACKENZIE

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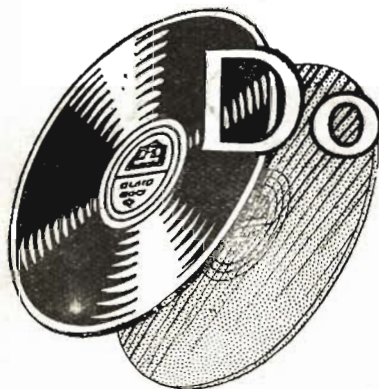
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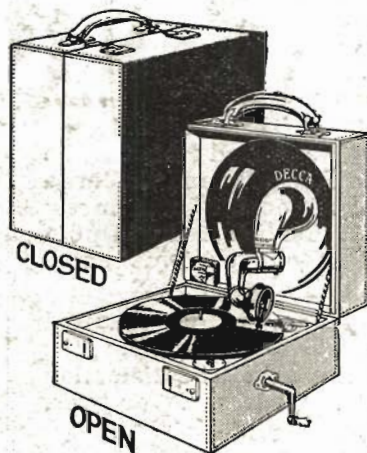
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Edited by
COMPTON MACKENZIE

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Vol. II.

MAY, 1925

No. 12

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A REVIEW OF THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1925

By THE EDITOR

I FIND myself in a difficult position this quarter, for I have been so busily engaged in trying every new record, not to mention a very large number of old ones, through the medium of what seems to me the most revolutionary . . . but the time is not yet ripe for expatiating on this happy combination. The point is that I have had to reverse so many judgments passed on old records owing to the effect of this happy combination that I have come to the conclusion that my remarks this quarter are likely to be less useful to the owners of ordinary combinations than they ought to be. To take one instance, I decided in March that the Vocalion issue of Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* would have to be voted, on the whole, a failure. The strings in the first movement lacked resonance, so that in spite of the excellently spirited conducting by Mr. Stanley Chapple the performance lacked life. Playing this same movement on the happy combination, I found it three times as good and resonant enough for anybody. You can easily imagine that I at once set to work on one or two other masterpieces whose reproduction had suffered.

I tried the first movement of the Columbia *Eroica*. Amazing improvement! I tried the Columbia *Seventh*. Well, it was not a triumphant success, because this never was and never will be a good recording, but I got a performance which I would never have believed that it could give. However, that's all I must say for the present, and if I lead you astray this quarter you must forgive me and accept my assurance that I have not been wasting my time and yours even if I have devoted rather less attention than usual to the latest records.

It has occurred to me several times in reading through our last numbers that we are apparently neglecting the lighter fare in our endeavour to do full justice to the substantial meals that the recording companies nowadays offer us every month. One company has proclaimed its hurt feelings, not only by removing its advertisement, but even by refusing to send any more records for review. It is unfortunate that our paper has been of such little use to them, but I will take this opportunity of pointing out that if they choose to despise the publicity of THE GRAMOPHONE they merely pro-

claim themselves behind the times, and that if they cannot sell their wares to our readers the reason is that they are not offering the wares our readers want. To pretend that outside our readers there exists a body of intelligent gramophiles large enough to support them indefinitely is nonsense; and, arrogant though it may sound, I am ready to stake my reputation on the slow but steady decay of any recording company that does affect to despise our influence. However, that no injustice may be done to lighter fare I propose to trim the ship by lightening the bows this quarter—in other words, to begin with the ballads and end with the symphonies. And really we ought not to be too severe on these ballad records. I felt more bitterly about them in the past; but now in their humbler position they appeal to one's pity. I remember the days when every drawing-room held a pile of such music (priced at 4s. and sold for 1s. 9d.) into which after dinner any young man or woman was liable to dig until a familiar title was found when with the help of an accomplice—I should say accompanist—he or she proceeded to inflict it upon those present. Well, I think it is better that the wireless and the gramophone should “entertain” us after dinner with this kind of music. At least we shall get it moderately well presented. Of the ballad baritones I give the palm to Mr. Robert Howe, of the Parlophone. His record of *The Bosun's Lament* and *The Longshoreman* is really sung and recorded to perfection. I thoroughly enjoyed, too, hearing once more *The Arrow and the Song*, another exceptionally well recorded disc, which Mr. Howe shares with Mr. George Baker, for whose contribution I did not care so much. Another good split record from the Parlophone has on one side *The Lost Chord* well sung by Miss Jessie Broughton, a contralto, and on the other a stirring rendering of Handel's *The Trumpet shall Sound* by Mr. Jamieson Dodds. I did not strike anything specially good among the Columbia ballads, but I feel doubtful of criticizing any of them too harshly, for I have noticed that Mr. Hubert Eisdell's records are never sent to me for review, presumably because I once ventured to say that he sang indistinctly. However, I'll risk getting no more of Mr. Edgar Coyle's records by saying that he sings *The Lass of Richmond Hill* and *It was a Lover and his Lass* without any feeling for the words at all, though distinctly enough. As a writer I feel strongly about the way so many singers treat their words. If I thought the gift would be appreciated I would present all the ballad singers now to be heard on the gramophone with the two records of Mr. John Coates issued by the Vocalion Company. There is good English singing. I hope all readers will mark them down in their lists for purchase as soon as possible. Of course, it's not the voice that it was, but the style is perfection, real *bel canto* with the

quality in English that Battistini gives us in Italian. This reads as if I were presuming to introduce Mr. Coates to your notice. Acquit me of such an absurdity. Only, I *am* anxious that in the flood of records you should not forget a truly great artist.

To return to Columbia records. I did not care at all for Mr. Glanville Davies in Mendelssohn's half-hearted *Consume them All*, and his rendering of *Don Juan's Serenade* by Tchaikovsky would not trouble the peace of any virgin. I liked much better Mr. Arthur Jordan's record, and I am most grateful to him for giving us César Franck's exquisite *Ave Maria*. Miss Dora Labbette is a favourite of mine, and I enjoy her breathless schoolgirl style of singing, but I do want to hear the words of the *Elizabethan Love Songs* in her two records, and I hardly heard one of them. Another offender in this respect is Mr. Norman Allin. It is ridiculous to sing Mendelssohn's *I am a Roamer* unless you can let the audience hear the words. He is equally indistinct and with less excuse in *Ethiopia Saluting the Colours*. If any reader who has never read Walt Whitman's poem can write it out for me from this record I'll apologise to Mr. Allin next month. I tremble to say that his *Parsifal* record bored me, because there is at least one correspondent of ours who seems to think that my lack of appreciation for *Parsifal* puts me on a level with Jack the Ripper. Of Dino Borgioli, the new tenor on Columbia, I find little to say at present. He offers the same old arias, and though I am grateful to him for not bawling, he is only one of half-a-dozen all giving us the same music. Those who sample his records will do neither worse nor better than if they did not. We require something very much out of the ordinary to invest in *Flower Songs* and *Salve dimoras* at this stage. The little more and how much it is, that's what I feel about tenors just now. I had hopes of Fleta in his first two records, but he grows more blatant with every issue. I renounce him as a successor to Caruso. Mario Chamlee and Lauri-Volpi, the Brunswick stars, are not for me. Lenghi-Cellini, Crimi, and Tokatyan, the Vocalion stalwarts, are preferable, but far, far from ideal. Anseau of H.M.V. is highly esteemed by good judges, but he jars on my ears. His record of the last scene in *Carmen* with Helen Sadoven is to my taste much inferior to that of Farrar and Martinelli. It may be that Anseau sings it better than Martinelli. But Martinelli is Don José. Anseau remains a good tenor. Farrar, in spite of her absurd American accent, is *Carmen*: Helen Sadoven is just singing it well. Joseph Hislop is to my mind scarcely better than Browning Mummery, which is not to say that he is not an extremely capable tenor. But where is the genius? Caruso had genius. McCormack has genius. The only comparatively new tenor

that I hear on the gramophone who has just that immense little more is Benjamino Gigli. If vanity does not wreck him, I shall put my money on Gigli. Johnstone sings magnificently in the only H.M.V. record of his I possess, *Ch'ella mi creda libero*. I should like to hear some more of his. I was much impressed by Charles Hackett of Columbia, but we have only had two records, one of which was tosh. Then there is Lazaro, who is in the front rank, and, in spite of our reviewers who find him nasal, I must say a word for Smirnoff. I thought exquisite his record of *Pourquoi, mon triste cœur* from *La Foire de Sorotchintsni*, and a duet from *Boris* sung with Maria Davidoff. This crept out in a supplementary H.M.V. list and must not be missed. In spite of my prejudice against Rosing I must admit that his recent records from the Vocalion people do impress me as it were in spite of myself. He has execrable lapses from good taste; his voice is not first-rate; yet he has a touch of genius. But I don't play him for my own pleasure. H.M.V. gave us two splendid Chaliapine records this quarter. Plenty of genius there. There was nothing of much merit from Peter Dawson, Robert Radford, Harry Dearth, Sydney Coltham, or Walter Glynne (all H.M.V.) I hoped for a performance of *The Lord is a Man of War* from Mr. Radford and Mr. Dawson, but there was more of the submarine than the man of war about it. It was better, however, than the English version of *Suoni la tromba* from *I Puritani* on the other side, though I'm bound to admit that the two singers make a proper pair of Roundheads. Still not quite so much realism is wanted for Italian opera. On another H.M.V. record Mr. Tudor Davies takes all the "art" out of Mozart by adopting knock-out tactics with two lovely arias. Both of them are severely punished, particularly *Il mio Tesoro*, and so far as I'm concerned at any rate may be counted out. In view of what I felt about this brutal style of fighting—I mean singing—I think it says something for my sense of justice that I was able thoroughly to enjoy Mr. Tudor Davies and Mme. Austral in the *Love Duet* from *Lohengrin*. It was really well sung, and on my instrument the accompaniment was perfect. The H.M.V. additions to their Wagnerian series are all commendable. There's as fine a chorus in *Hagen Summons the Vassals* as you may hear on the gramophone, though there was one tenor who blasted when the needle touched in my soundbox. The *Valkyrie* record is not so good, but the *Lohengrin Wedding Music* and *Introduction to Act III*. is in the very front rank of orchestral records. Another splendid record from that mid-February list is the duet of Ljungberg and Browning Mummery from the first act of *Tosca*. What a voice that woman has! As rich as a Titian. Mr. Mummery comports himself as if he had been wearing a red coat all

his gramophonic life. The melodious contralto aria from *Rienzi*, *Gerechter Gott*, is gloriously sung by a newcomer to the H.M.V. list, Maartje Offers. I rank this record very high, though I fancy that on some instruments her voice might beat about like a pigeon in a conservatory. However, she is superb with my happy combination. Myself I should have said she was a mezzo, not a true contralto.

And what have the sopranos given us this quarter? Two of them at least I am afraid have offered us poor records. Selma Kurz completely fails with Strauss' *Ständchen*, though I hesitate to put all the blame on the singer. It struck me that this was bad recording. The Max Reger song on the other side is better. I could not bear Miss Frieda Hempel in *Alleluia*. Both the arrangement and her singing of it seemed to be utterly insincere. The aria from *Joshua* on the other side bored me. The fact is we've had a great deal too many Handel arias this quarter for my taste. Handel's songs are like cold baths. It's glorious when you can plunge into the sea itself as you do with his greatest efforts, but a lot of his songs are just splashing about in a tub, and they irritate me to the point of exasperation. Fine virile stuff, says your man of taste. So it may be. So is a North-Easter. But I prefer a gale from the South-West, and Handel can give that as well as, if not better than, anybody. But his chill Easterly winds. Ugh!

Miss Scotney, whom I welcomed with acclamation when she first appeared on Vocalion records, does not make too successful a début on the H.M.V. She seems depressed by the black label. However, the songs are poor stuff; Galli-Curci's record of the laughing song from Auber's *Manon* will last our lifetime, and Ophelia's Ballad from Thomas' *Hamlet* is beneath contempt. Miss Mary Lewis has thrown off the black and put on the scarlet. We first heard her in those fine records of *Hugh the Drover* and were all of us delighted with her. She now sings enchantingly two airs (one the *Meditation*) from Massenet's *Thais*. I look forward to many happy moments with her records in the future. A lovely voice and a charming personality behind it. It's odd that most tenors in their various classes sound alike, whereas sopranos seem much better able to express themselves through song. I hope that my readers are not leaving out Miss Olga Haley when they order from the Vocalion bulletins. There are two more splendid records of hers this quarter, a new Schubert song on both of them. She gives me as much pleasure as any woman now singing for the gramophone, because apart from her true and brilliant voice she is such an artist. There's a new soprano in the last Vocalion bulletin, Winifred Dallé, whose voice I find delightful. They are just two pleasant little revue songs she gives us, but what a difference it does make to hear

them sung. I have no patience with most of our musical comedy stars, at any rate on the gramophone, with their mincing enunciation and foolish little voices. Perhaps, if the gramophone could record their legs, I should not grudge them the discs they waste; but their voices—well, of course they have no voices. There is a Brunswick record by Florence Easton singing *Heart o' Mine* and *Over the Hills* which is a good specimen of this class. I must be brief with the rest of the singing this quarter, but I must mention Eric Marshall and Morlais Morgan in the Vocalion list and splendid Parlophones of Max Hirzel (tenor) in two airs from *Lohengrin*, and Fumagalli-Riva in *Vissi d' arte* and a delicious aria from *Falstaff*, new, I fancy, to the gramophone. This is a soprano who can always be relied upon, and seems to me better each time. Nor must Elsa Alsen's (Parlo.) Wagner solos be overlooked. In the H.M.V. bulletins the two records of Carmen Hill, are as always with her work, first-rate. Dinh Gilly in both his records is good. I did not much care for the Leila Megane and less than usual for the McCormack.

A feature of the bulletins lately has been the number of really excellent American vocal records. Those of my readers who remember Victoria Monks in her prime will enjoy Isabelle Patricola of the Vocalion. I could play her four records every night. Then there is Aileen Stanley on H.M.V. not quite so good, but in the same list Brooke Johns is wonderful. So is the accompaniment. *It takes a good man to do that*. Well, all I can say is that at the end of an exhausting evening I played this record over three times for the laughs it gave me, and it takes a good record to do that! Finally, I have a grievance against Columbia. For the first time this quarter I received the records of Layton and Johnstone, and thought them entrancing. I looked through a Columbia list and found that four or five records of theirs had already appeared which had never been sent to me. If the member of the Columbia staff responsible for such treatment of me reads this, let me say in print that I will not forgive him until I receive the earlier records. Layton and Johnstone are so good that they almost made *Tea for Two* and *I want to be Happy* as wonderful as we have been told they are. To read the dramatic critics one might have thought that a new Sullivan had appeared. My good friend Mr. Percy Scholes recently took me to task in *The Observer* for my reference to the bursts of unanimity in which critics indulge. Well, here's an instance of it. *Tea for Two* is as silly and sickly a song as I have ever heard, but to read the allusions to it in the press one might suppose that the words were by Heine and the music by Schumann, each writing at his best. In my remarks I should have made it clear that I was not referring to the few genuine critics that are to be found of every form

of artistic expression; but Mr. Scholes must admit that there are not enough genuine critics to supply the countless organs of contemporary opinion, and I still maintain that the mass of critics have only the courage of the herd, lowering their heads and charging blindly forward in praise or blame. And after all such behaviour is natural. There are too many books, too many plays, too many concerts. The critical work of, say, Mr. Ernest Newman who week in week out over years produces a couple of columns every word of which deserves to be read, is nothing less than miraculous. He makes some of the literary critics sound like broken-winded Grub Street hacks.

Why is it that the great violinists of the day do not think it worth their while to bequeath to posterity something better than fiddling? This was a question I asked in the second number of THE GRAMOPHONE. And at last we have a concerto played by the greatest of them all. All I hope now is that the public response will be such as to convince Kreisler that it was worth doing. On the outside of the April bulletin of H.M.V. is a photograph of the violinist with the score of Mozart's Concerto in D in his left hand and beside him Sir Landon Ronald with a cigarette in his right. "Well, we've done it at last," they are obviously saying, Kreisler a little wistfully, Sir Landon rather defiantly. May I, on behalf of our readers, ask Sir Landon to throw away that cigarette that we may shake him warmly by the hand? And may I beg Kreisler not to keep that marvellous right hand of his in the breast of the overcoat, for we want to shake that? And finally may I ask them both to take off those very heavy overcoats they are wearing and give us another concerto as exquisitely and as marvellously played as this one? The two H.M.V. records of Stravinsky's *Fire Bird* conducted by Albert Coates are a triumph. These modern composers might sometimes be writing with one ear on the gramophone, such justice does it render them. I notice that one or two correspondents claim that American orchestral records are better than English. Well, unless the Americans have made the most astonishing strides during the last year, I simply don't believe them. Nothing I have heard recorded in America comes near English recording. It is true that the Brunswick piano and violin records are wonderful; but the American H.M.V. piano records are mostly wretched. I shall acquire the Rachmaninoff Concerto as soon as I have a moment to write a letter and order it; but at the present I am sceptical about its surpassing worth. One of the reasons why I can fling myself so enthusiastically into this gramophone work is that at any rate there England does lead the world, and I take off my hat to the English companies and to the public that supports them. If the English film industry had

possessed as much imagination as a pine-moth caterpillar (and that is precious little) it would not now be moribund. I have received a good deal of praise for my humble efforts on behalf of the gramophone, but what would they have been worth if I had not had to deal with a live and intelligent industry? Music in England at present is practically supported by the gramophone. When people say nowadays that they cannot stand the gramophone, it is only a cowardly way of saying that they cannot stand music. To come back to *The Fire Bird*. Are you going to buy it? Well, if you like early Stravinsky (and I find he wears very well) here are two superb records. The H.M.V. *Francesca da Rimini*, also conducted by Albert Coates, is not so successful as *The Fire Bird* chiefly because the effect of massed strings playing very rapidly is not the one that comes off best on the gramophone. I should not recommend these two discs for a small instrument. Anybody who acquires them must make a point of trying them out at home first if he can. There is plenty of melody and quite half of the symphonic poem would come out splendidly, but the beginning is a bit of a problem.

The Columbia *Tod und Verklärung*, with which Bruno Walter and the Philharmonic Orchestra make their début on the gramophone, is such a remarkably different interpretation from Albert Coates' H.M.V. performance that for once I do not grumble at unnecessary reduplication. But reduplication is a great trial to me, because reduplication of a large work means that I am asked to choose for readers which they shall acquire. I feel fairly confident that most of them would prefer the Columbia version. But those who prefer the Flonzaley Quartet to the Lener Quartet will prefer the H.M.V. version. Bruno Walter is more romantic, not to say sentimental. Coates inspires more awe. By the way, we get the famous gong in the Columbia version, which is five-sided. The sixth side is taken up by Berlioz's *Dance of the Sprites* from *The Damnation of Faust*. We want some more Berlioz on the gramophone. It's not fair to use him always for spare sides. What about the *Symphonie Fantastique*? Berlioz is sneered at by our impotent and introverted highbrows, but he was one of those who bore the heat of the fight and made it easy for those who followed him to do better what he had been the first to attempt. Sir Edward Elgar took me to hear this last autumn, and he did not sneer at a great predecessor. Saint-Saëns, who was not half the man that Berlioz was, has had much more attention on the gramophone. This quarter Columbia gave us his *Carnival des Animaux* which I have marked down as excellent records for our next test. I am backing my happy combination to win in a canter. They really are feeble on every other kind of gramophone of mine except this.

Columbia has made a speciality of Ravel, and I much commend the record of a *Pavane pour une Infante defunte* conducted by Frank Bridge. I have alluded already to the Vocalion version of Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*. You can take it from me that the improvement in Vocalion recording lately is astonishing. I hope we shall get the *Reformation* and the *Scottish* symphonies at the same popular price, and conducted by the same spirited young conductor Mr. Stanley Chapple.

We are the richer for some splendid chamber music this quarter. I must give the palm to Thibaud and Cortot's performance of the Franck sonata on four double-sided red records. This is perfectly recorded and exquisitely played. As you know, I have little use for Cortot as a Schumann player, but here his foot's upon his native heath and Germany well away over the Rhine. These are some of the records that I shall keep handy for conversions. "What? You don't care for the gramophone? Just let me play you . . ." Well, you know the way we do it, and that beautiful light not of this world which shines from the eyes of the happy soul.

Then there is the performance of the second *Rasoumovsky* by the Vocalion Quartet, and one murmurs to oneself all the time, "Well, perhaps after all Beethoven never did write quite such a lovely slow movement." This is in the front rank of recorded quartets. The Lener Quartet gave us the *Mozart in B flat*. Note that Columbia brought out a cut version of this with the London String Quartet some years ago. This is a vintage Lener. I was delighted by the Brahms trio for cello, clarinet, and piano. This is the best piano recording that the Columbia have done. I think they must have taken the mattress off the bed under which they apparently put their recording piano. We want more of these less usual combinations on the gramophone, for a work like this is rarely to be heard on the concert platform. I have nothing but praise for the Columbia issue of the great Bach *Concerto in D minor for two violins* (Arthur Catterall and John S. Bridge). The stirring tone of the principals and of Hamilton Harty's orchestra is the best that Columbia has given us for some time. The Bach *Pianoforte Concerto in D minor* conducted by Sir Henry Wood, which introduces Miss Harriet Cohen to the gramophone, is less successful. The piano tone is brittle and the strings lack virility. This is the first piano concerto put out by Columbia and I have no doubt that their next effort will be better. If there is any fault on the playing side I should be inclined to blame Sir Henry Wood more than Miss Cohen; but to my mind the fault lies either with the recording, or more likely with the new process. I was not very well satisfied with the Mendelssohn *G minor Concerto*. One of our reviewers the other day asked

why the piano always sounded better in concertos. To my mind it is rather that the orchestra sounds worse. The exceptions are Beethoven's *Emperor* and the violin in *D*. Can it be that Beethoven knew how to write concertos better than anybody else? That probably is the reason. Certainly neither H.M.V. nor any other company has in concerto recording touched the excellence of the two Beethoven records before or since. By the way, what about the fourth and third Beethoven concertos? We are waiting for them. And we are also waiting for the Tchaikovsky *B flat minor*. Hurry up! Hurry up!

Some of the Parlophone orchestral records have been open to criticism on the grounds of harshness, particularly in the management of their heavy brass. With my happy combination all that harshness has now vanished, but there still remain on too many discs imperfections not of recording but of pressing. I earnestly invite attention to these faults, which I cannot help thinking avoidable and which in the near future the Parlophone people are likely to regret very much more than they may be supposed to regret them now. I am sorry to write in this strain of oracular ambiguity, but a revelation of such transcendent importance is pending that I am bound to take notice of it while at the same time no premature announcement of what it is can possibly be made.

Meanwhile, to return to the orchestral Parlophones of the quarter. The *Surprise Symphony* makes a beautiful set, and with the present capacity of gramophones may be counted their most successful orchestral effort up to date. Beethoven's *Eighth* is less successful than the Columbia issue. I don't really care for the interpretation, particularly of the last movement. The *Scheherazade Suite* has apparently many rough passages and at present it is for a miniature reproduction by means of fibre. I was not greatly struck by the *Don Juan*, but that may be because I am thoroughly tired of this particular effort of Strauss, of which we now have three versions on the gramophone, which is too much of anything except the superlatively best, so long as much of the superlatively best remains unrecorded.

Of lighter music this quarter we have had many good records. All the De Groots were good. So too was the Mayfair Orchestra's selection from *Sumurun*, conducted by the composer. It gave me a shock though to find that a tune I had once been able to listen to daily almost for weeks at a stretch—it is the last tune on the first side of the record—has lost all its magic. It shows me almost more clearly than anything how my musical taste has changed since the autumn of 1911. I shall have something to say about this tune, when I go on with my musical autobiography. It is scarcely necessary to mention that the Marek Weber records are as good as ever. *The Ladies of Prague* is perhaps the individual

best; but they are all good. So too is the Edith Lorand Orchestra, and the selection from *Trovatore* is well worth a couple of records. Another record of light music that gave me great pleasure was a 12in. Columbia with the *Blue Danube* on one side and *Valse Bleue* on the other, played by the Savoy Havana Band. Of band records, my pick for the quarter is *La Boutique Fantasque*, played by the Life Guards from Vocalion.

Albert Sammons has returned to Columbia, but his swan-song with the Vocalion—a delicious early sonata of Handel's played with Ethel Hobday—is to my mind the best record he has ever achieved, and I rate it twice as high as the Delius *Sonata* and the Vitali *Chaconne* in the Columbia list. Lionel Tertis too has forsaken Vocalion for Columbia. I am sorry about these changes just when the Vocalion recording has made this immense improvement in every way. However, to compensate them for these great losses they still have Jelly d'Aranyi getting better and better every month, and they have Mr. Howard Bliss, who has given us the two finest 'cello records I have heard for a long time; and this quarter has yielded an exceptional 'cello harvest. Two fine records from Casals (Col.), a fine record from Cedric Sharpe (H.M.V.), and two fine records from Emmanuel Feuermann (Parlo.). But to my thinking the best of the lot are those of Mr. Bliss. He has all the virility and rhythm of Casals and very nearly as much breadth of emotion. Moreover, the recording is better.

I don't think much of the Aeolian Quintette, who gave us two more faked-up solos. This is trifling with the public. We do not appreciate this kind of cleverness. There are plenty of real quintets that are badly wanted. These discs, in spite of some good playing and recording must be dismissed as worthless. On the other hand, the Spencer Dyke Quartet's records of Dvorák's *Nigger Quartet* and Haydn's *Hornpipe Quartet* are in the front rank of the gramophone's chamber music. The former is not a favourite of my own, but its popularity is undoubted, and I strongly recommend it as an investment to the reader who is beginning to cultivate his taste for chamber music. Indeed, he might do worse than start with both these Vocalion issues. As with everything else of the Vocalion issues, the recording of chamber music is getting steadily better nowadays. One or two of our readers have written to ask for my opinion of the first issues of the National Gramophonic Society. Well, though this is a bit like asking a father what he thinks of his own children, I must try to oblige. First of all, I think they cannot be considered an outstanding success with fibre. They require, and what is more deserve, a loud needle. My own favourite is Beethoven's *Harp Quartet*. I honestly do not believe this could be better played. What I find extraordinarily attractive about the Spencer

Dyke combination is the excellence of the viola and the violoncello. Nobody can make the criticism of gramophone chamber music so often heard that the viola and violoncello are lost. The Schönberg sextet, which rather frightened some of our subscribers (myself included) beforehand, turns out to be as easy to wander about in as the moonlight night of which it treats. There is a good deal of Parsifalian yearning, and in certain moods I should call it sickly. It reminds me of Ibsen's *Brand*. I always feel that I am on the verge of growing out of Debussy, but somehow I never do, and somehow I think that I never shall. But he too is a composer for whom I ask only in certain moods. His music is for me a kind of self-indulgence. I always find that I must be mentally relaxed to enjoy him. It is the proper incidental music for day-dreams. With the quality of the playing and recording both in this quartet and in the Schönberg sextet I cannot imagine that anybody would quarrel. I have no doubt that many people *will* criticise the recording of the Schubert trio. I beg them to be patient. I hope soon to provide the means for everybody to find it, what I know it to be when given a chance, one of the finest examples of chamber music hitherto recorded. By the way, it's a strange thing that nobody has used the second movement for a funeral march. It is one of the noblest elegies in all music.

I have for some time now been testing the Dawes-Clark needle tension and the Flex diaphragm. The latter with me is fitted to a No. 2 soundbox. It can, of course, be fitted to any soundbox. I should describe its effect as somewhere between a composition diaphragm and a mica. It is more "mellow" than the latter and less "muffled" than the former. The ideal diaphragm? Yes, if you are going to forsake the achievement of realism on the gramophone. As things stand at present, I wager that many more of our readers will like the Flex diaphragm than dislike it. But I stand firm for mica. I do still hope for greater realism. I will not rest until I hear an orchestra from the corridor of Queen's Hall when I listen to an orchestral record in the next room. And let me tell you that as I write these words I am nearer to that achievement than I have ever been. And if I am not more enthusiastic about the Flex diaphragm it is because there is danger in any device that tends to satisfy gramophonists. It is very good, but it is an improvement that leads nowhere. With regard to the tension device I feel the same thing. *A fibre needle is a realist's counsel of despair*. When a gramophonist settles down to fibre, it is a sign of gramphonic sclerosis. It means to say that he has run the gamut of his gramphonic adventures and has surrendered to what he thinks is the inevitable imperfection of his instrument. This week I have used six packets of Trumpeter needles. Each needle, of which there are two hundred in a packet and which Messrs. Chappell

issue as *only fit for dancing to*, plays two sides of a record. So that I have listened to the gramophone playing six hundred double-sided records or at a modest calculation to 4,200 minutes of music, which works out at listening steadily for ten hours a day to a *very loud* needle playing every kind of record.

The device which enabled me to perform this tremendous feat of concentration is occupying my mind to such an extent that I cannot do justice to anything that seems to me to partake of a makeshift. For long fibres the Dawes-Clarke tension device is excellent, but it is an experiment that leads from my point of view nowhere. That does not detract from its ability to do what it sets out to do. But it does not set out to do enough. The same applies to doped fibres. I cannot hear that there's any improvement in tone from the use of doped fibres, and I think that Mr. Dawes-Clarke may claim with justice that ordinary fibre played with his tension is likely to last just as long as a doped fibre. Fibres are as uncertain as the bamboos from which they are cut. You never know when a bamboo will flower and die, and if one bamboo in the neighbourhood begins, the rest usually follow suit. So it befalls with a box of fibres. No, I say as the King of Assyria said to Hezekiah: "Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed." Will you see a reed not merely shaken, but broken by the wind? Then dope your fibres with poppy and mandragora and all the drowsy syrups of the world and try to play the Parlophone record of the *Pique Dame Overture*.

When the Columbia Company started their delightful system of issuing their big works in special albums, I begged them to print the names in the backs. Let me call their attention to a recent advertisement of theirs in which these albums are shown thus stamped. Why should greater consideration be extended to possible purchasers than to actual purchasers? That advertisement proved the necessity of printing the names of the works on their backs. I do beg for a little of what is after all only common sense. The omission of the titles on the back is a piece of amateurishness. So pray let us have that pennyworth of tar, Columbia.

I thought I had finished this review, and I find that I have forgotten the records by Frederick Lamond of the *Waldstein Sonata*. It was time we had this. These are better than anything Mr. Lamond has yet given us. I congratulate both him and H.M.V. The Sapellnikoff discs issued by Vocalion are brilliantly recorded, and I do hope that we shall presently be given a concerto. I'm inclined to think that we shall get the best we've yet had from the Vocalion in their present victorious mood. The Fourth Beethoven will suit us well.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

OUR COMPETITION

"IT'S no use my entering for the circulation competition," writes one of our earliest supporters. "I've roped all my friends in long ago; they positively daren't come near me if they don't take in THE GRAMOPHONE; however, I hope that it will be tremendously successful and further increase the scope of the finest, most interesting and instructive musical journal in the world."

Quite a natural point of view this, and one which we recognise with real gratitude. Our best friends have not waited for the offer of prizes before making an effort to increase our circulation among their friends. What more can they do?

Please give the matter your serious thought. Circumstances, of course, differ with each individual who reads these lines; but if the enrolment of twenty new subscribers brings you automatically thirty shillings' worth of new records (of your own choice), surely it is worth while taking some personal trouble and even spending a few shillings in printing and stamps in order to circularise all the owners of gramophones in your neighbourhood. This, at any rate, is a fairly safe investment of time and money. If you fly higher and aim at the First Prize, which, with the help of our friends in the trade, is now worth about twenty-five pounds, you could afford to advertise in your local paper and get into touch with all gramophone lovers who read it. You could even persuade some of the local tradesmen, the errand boys, the cinema attendants, the district visitors, to help you to secure the prize.

There is no need to suggest ways in which the dealer can induce his clients to sign the Order Form. The prizes in this class are not enormous, but they will be won after some keen competition among the small country music shops, the great London and provincial dealers, and any kind of firm which has gramophone folk among its clientele; not improbably by one of the first class who has virgin soil on which to scatter the good seed.

Write to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, for a packet of Order Forms at once. Plan your campaign with ardour combined with discretion. When you get a new subscriber fill in the particulars and sign your own name in the left-hand corner and post the Order Form to the London Office.

It is immaterial whether a new subscriber gets the paper from the London Office by post or through his local newsagent or music shop; but it is important that we should see the Order Form at the London Office and credit the introducer accordingly.

In addition to extra prizes announced in the last number, Messrs. Boumphrey, Arundel and Co., have

very nobly offered a model (O) of the *Sesame* Record Cabinet, in oak or mahogany (value £7 15s.), to the winner, and Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb (1924), Ltd., have given a bound volume of miniature scores of all Beethoven's string quartets, which has been allotted to the second prize for individual readers.

This is how the prize-list stands at present:—

To the firm or dealer who has secured the highest number of new subscribers by August 31st—

TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS.

Second Prize .. SEVEN POUNDS.

Third Prize .. THREE POUNDS.

To the individual reader who has secured the highest number of new subscribers by August 31st—

(a) TEN POUNDS.

(b) Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* in an album, given by the Gramophone Co., Ltd.

(c) An E.M.G. portable gramophone, given by Mr. E. M. Ginn.

(d) An "Astra" No. 4 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Two Guineas, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

(e) Twelve "Polydor" records of winner's own choice, given by Messrs. Alfred Imhof.

(f) A "Sesame" cabinet, model O, given by Messrs. Boumphrey, Arundel and Co.

Second Prize:—

(a) THREE POUNDS.

(b) An "Astra" No. 2 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of One Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

(c) Bound volume of miniature scores of Beethoven's string quartets, given by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb (1924), Ltd.

Third Prize:—

(a) TWO POUNDS.

(b) "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Half a Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

To every reader who gets twenty new subscribers—thirty shillings' worth of records (reader's choice).

To every reader who gets ten new subscribers—a copy of "Gramophone Nights" with the Editor's autograph.

The Editor's decision in all cases will be final.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

"Madam Butterfly"

IN Puccini's own estimation *Madam Butterfly* was his best opera. I agree with him that it was, and I am also inclined to believe that it brought him a larger income in royalties than either the *Bohème* or the *Tosca*. The strange part of it was that when first produced in its original shape at La Scala, Milan, in 1904, it was as good as hissed off the stage. The audience hooted and booed in true Italian fashion, as though they had hated Puccini instead of loving and admiring him; they would not have his Japanese opera at any price. Obviously there was something the matter with it, beyond the mere question of unfamiliar atmosphere and personages, but exactly what it was difficult to say. Puccini was not to be discouraged, however. He talked it over with his friend, Tito Ricordi, then the head of the famous publishing firm, and between them they decided that certain scenes needed to be shortened and remodelled; otherwise there was surely nothing wrong with either the story or the music. It must have been very early in 1905 when I heard from Luigi Mancinelli (who had then conducted at Covent Garden for sixteen years) that *Madam Butterfly* had been tried again in its revised form at Brescia, and with so much success that he looked forward to introducing it to London in the following season. But *l'homme propose*, etc.; for Mancinelli was not well enough to conduct after the *Bohème* performance on June 24th, and his successor, Cleofonte Campanini, had the privilege of directing the new opera on July 10th, with Destinn, Caruso, Scotti, and Gabrielle Lejeune in the principal parts. Puccini himself was present, and that splendid performance has always remained in my mind the perfect model for the rendering of this opera. Needless to say, it was received with the utmost enthusiasm.

The first English performance that I heard was in the following year in New York, where I was then living, and for which Mr. Henry W. Savage engaged me to train all his artists—two complete casts—in their diction studies. Tito Ricordi came over to put the finishing studies to the production, which took place at the Garden Theatre on Nov. 12th, 1906. At the Metropolitan Opera House *Madam Butterfly* was not given until the following February; Caruso and Scotti being associated this time with Geraldine Farrar, while Louise Homer was the Suzuki. In both languages the opera was splendidly sung and

always rapturously applauded. I shall never hear it better given. Puccini went to America expressly for the productions of this and his *Manon Lescaut*, which was also a novelty there, and his reception when he entered the huge opera-house was one of the finest tributes that the popular composer ever received.

It is not inappropriate to recall these facts, because it was to an American magazine-writer (Mr. John L. Long) and the play founded upon his story of *Madam Butterfly* that Puccini owed the material for the libretto of this opera. How much of it all was due to the genius for stage effect of that arch-producer, Mr. David Belasco, has also to be borne in mind, notwithstanding the failure, comparatively speaking, of Puccini's second attempt to borrow from the same source—namely, in *The Girl of the Golden West*. But never mind; one *chef d'œuvre* from a single field is not a bad harvest; and there can be little doubt that in the opinion of the world at large *Madam Butterfly* is a veritable masterpiece. The music is extraordinarily melodious, original, curiously and cleverly harmonised. Its suggestion of Japanese colour, like that of Sullivan's *Mikado*, owes little if aught to national tunes, but it does suggest them very often in a wonderful degree. It is grateful music for the singer; it contains many strong dramatic climaxes; the orchestration is masterly in its variety and its use of clever devices; the ensembles are interesting, and one chorus at least—that based upon the letter *motif* and sung at the back with *bouche fermée*—is as haunting as it is ingenious. Altogether I know no opera from the same pen that boasts the same fertility of resource and characterisation, or that palls so little upon the ear, no matter how often it be heard.

My task as reviewer differs in the present instance from that which confronted me in the case of *Carmen*, in that I am not dealing with a heterogeneous collection of records from various sources, but with an entirely novel product in the shape of a single series of gramophone records covering the whole opera of *Madam Butterfly*. This product, enclosed in a handsome, elegantly-bound album, consists of fourteen double-sided 12in. discs, and comes from the *ateliers* of His Master's Voice. It reflects upon that firm's infinite credit, involving as it does a much less easy proposition than the recording of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, which just preceded

it. *Madam Butterfly* is not divided up into "numbers," but is a continuous affair; and the points for breaking off have been well selected, while very few cuts have been made. We have here practically the music of the entire work, and the cast of English singers employed is as follows:—

Madam Butterfly (Soprano) ..	Rosina Buckman.
Suzuki (Mezzo-Soprano) ..	Nellie Walker.
F. B. Pinkerton (Tenor) ..	Tudor Davies.
Kate Pinkerton (Mezzo-Soprano)	Bessie Jones.
Sharpless (Baritone)	Frederick Ranalow.
Goro (Tenor)	Sydney Coltham.
Prince Yamadori (Baritone) ..	Edward Halland.
The Bonze (Bass)	Edward Halland.
Conductor ..	Eugène Goossens.

It is nobody's fault, I suppose, that the English adaptation of Illica and Giacosa's libretto used here is that published in the Ricordi vocal score, and necessarily sung in English performances of the opera. It is not one of those translations which will tend to foster the admiration and love of the British public for opera in the vernacular. Like those of the *Bohème* and *Tosca*, it is undistinguished, lacking in poetic grace, too frequently stupid and commonplace. Nor is it very singable either. In America I was obliged to alter many of the words and eliminate others that are superfluous, as, indeed, I find Mr. Ranalow has wisely done with his part in the present version. The pity is that, once the damage is done, there is no real remedy for this sort of thing. Messrs. Ricordi are rather obstinate in such matters and perhaps a trifle too indifferent at the outset. The cost of reprinting scores and bringing out new editions is, of course, far too heavy to be contemplated, even if artists can be persuaded (which they cannot) to put themselves to the trouble of learning improved versions of operas that they already know. Consequently, the H.M.V., and with them Mr. Eugène Goossens, and after them the vast community of gramophone lovers, must, like myself, perforce be content with the verbal gifts bestowed upon them by the gods of Milan!

But the music remains unaffected, reproduced as it is with a measure of spirit and accuracy that is truly delightful to the critical ear. The undercurrent of orchestration flows throughout with pellucid clearness, neatly and delicately executed, and almost as easy to follow as in the theatre. Seeing what a part it plays in the score of the opera, this means no small achievement. If it is occasionally rough, happily it is not so at the moment when the voices are in evidence. Thus at the very beginning of Act I. the noisy prelude dies down directly Pinkerton and Goro start their conversation in No. 1 anent *The Walls and the Ceiling*, and the words come out fairly well. (By the way,

I am not quoting the catalogue number of each of these 28 records. Enough that they begin with D.893 and run on regularly from Nos. 1 to 10, on five discs, these containing the first act.) Even at this stage I perceive by my Columbia Grafonola that the voices of Mr. Tudor Davies and Mr. Coltham will benefit by the use of a soft needle; there is no need for Goro to be quite so explosive, or for Pinkerton's narrative to Sharpless to be so strongly emphasised.

The duet between the two Americans is continued in No. 3, *Is the bride very pretty?* Here Mr. Ranalow's tone is excellent and his diction incisive and smooth. Here, too, the girls arrive. In No. 4, *What a sky, what a sea!* Butterfly's voice should approach gradually, but Miss Buckman is already "on the spot." She is especially loud on syllables with "e" or an "a" in them—a disparity that might have been guarded against; but when she sings *piano* her tone is very sweet and sympathetic. It sounds well later on in the colloquy with Pinkerton, when she shows him her "girl's few possessions," and in that with Sharpless in No. 5, *What might your age be*, which Mr. Ranalow sensibly reduces to "What is your age?" (Also he brings out the fact that Butterfly is eighteen, not fifteen; a wise precaution, seeing that the stage baby appearing in the next act is generally half his mother's age.) Then comes the ensemble with the relations and officials who gather for the wedding, and here Mr. Ranalow's voice dominates the scene. No. 6, *I should like to*, continues the music down to the end of the marriage ceremony and makes a remarkably effective record. In No. 7, *Dear Madam Butterfly*, that harsh personage, the Bonze, comes in with his fierce denunciations of poor Cio-cio-san, leading up to the departure of Sharpless and the relations, all of which cleverly suggests the stage atmosphere. Finally, in Nos. 8, 9, and 10, we get the whole of the love duet for Butterfly and Pinkerton. It is, on the whole, capitally sung by Miss Rosina Buckman and Mr. Tudor Davies, despite the stress laid by the former on her favourite "forward" vowels, and there is abundant passion in this concluding episode of the first act.

Apropos of Miss Buckman, I would mention that her inequalities of resonance are considerably modified by the use of a soft needle, and also by playing her records on the Sonora Model. At the same time, this can only be done at the expense of the orchestration, which comes out best, I find, on the Grafonola—information which will only be valuable to those who can choose between the two. Happily, however, our Butterfly improves as she goes on; that is to say, after No. 11, in which she scolds poor Suzuki with jets of penetrating tone that really hurt. Being now in Act II., No 12, *And with his heart so heavy*, promptly brings us to *Un bel dì*, and there, somehow, the inequalities

are so much less perceptible that one can enjoy the most hackneyed piece in the opera without reservation. What follows is equally good. Sharpless comes upon the scene for the next six records and his singing is simply splendid; in fact, I fancy I am right in surmising that Mr. Ranalow inspires Miss Buckman as much here as he might on the stage. After No. 13, *Come, she's here*, we have the entrance of the love-sick Yamadori and the subsequent confab between him, the Consul, and Butterfly, extending to No. 14, *We were saying*, and No. 15, *You hear me*.

The fine bass voice of Mr. Edward Halland tells well all through here, and the picturesque bits of orchestral colour stand out in strong relief. Where Butterfly is emotional Miss Buckman is quite admirable; the lovely quality of her voice comes out in its true beauty. In the letter scene and in No. 16, *How on earth can I tell her*, Mr. Ranalow's alternate touches of humour and pathos enable us to visualise the whole picture. Then No. 17, *Look here, then!* introduces the wonderful baby, that should be two years old, and on the stage always looks (thanks to the law) seven or eight. Butterfly's fantasy and the departure of Sharpless fill the remainder of this and most of No. 18, *'Tis late, I must be going*. The succeeding scene with Suzuki (No. 19, *Look, 'tis a man of war*) carries us on to the first part of the Cherry-blossom duet, which ends in No. 20, *Not a flower left*. Miss Nellie Walker, an artistic singer with a sympathetic contralto timbre, is quite equal to her share of the task, and the two voices blend admirably. So it goes on to the close of the act, the quaint incident of the "make-up" and the preparations for the all-night vigil (*Bring me now my wedding garment*, No. 21), followed by the Letter melody, which the distant voices sing *bouche fermée* with all the accustomed effect.

The third act is the shortest, and it has less interest both dramatic and musical, than the other two. To me poor Butterfly's tragedy, with its inevitable climax of desertion and death, is always distinctly painful; I resent the presence of Mrs. Pinkerton the Second as an unwarrantable intrusion, and her request for the child as a downright piece of cruelty. Anyhow, there it is; we must accept it as one of those unpleasant *dénouements* whereof operatic stories afford too many examples, and be thankful that at least it proceeds swiftly to its close. The orchestral introduction is contained in No. 22 and flows on into No. 23, *'Tis daylight*, with the distant snatches of choral song and the *reprise* of the pretty cradle lullaby to which Butterfly takes away her child. Both records are well made, and enhance our admiration for the alertness and skill that Mr. Goossens has bestowed upon the whole of the instrumentation. In the trio for Suzuki, Sharpless and Pinkerton (No. 24, *Who is it?*) the composer is at his strongest, and the two men put plenty of

energy into it; but the Suzuki (who in this act is Miss Gladys Peel, not Miss Walker) sounds weak by comparison. After No. 25, *Is it not as I told you?*—well-merited reproach!—the American men make room for the two wives, whose pathetic encounter also fills No. 26, *He is here!* Mr. Tudor Davies delivers his full-voiced farewell without stint (it is his most generous deed), and Miss Buckman infuses genuine dramatic power into the concluding passages of her act of renunciation, as set forth in the last two records, No. 27, *Ah, can you not forgive me?* and No. 28, *You! You!*

On the whole this final climax is not unworthy of an opera that is replete with emotional outbursts and pathetic situations, nor is its rendering inferior in this new gramophone setting to the best that has gone before. Once more let me offer my tribute of sincere and hearty eulogy to all associated in what must have been an extremely difficult task, and also to the enterprising house at whose instance that task was undertaken.



Wireless.

By the courtesy of the British Broadcasting Company members of the staff have had several opportunities of inspecting the new electro-magnetic system by which the gramophone records are broadcasted during the weekly hour, 1 to 2 p.m. on Thursdays. This is so important a development that it will be watched with great interest by gramophonists as well as by radiolists. The recorded music is taken straight from the grooves to the broadcasting apparatus. Instead of the genie leaping from his lair and becoming audible as sound in the sound-box, travelling through tone-arm and amplifier to the open air of the studio at 2 LO, diving again into the microphone, travelling inaudible all over the world and assuming shape again as sound in the ear-pieces and loud speakers of a million homes, he now avoids all this dishevelled process and goes as it were straight from the gramophone record to the radiolist's ear. We shall have more to say about the implications of this advance in a later number.

In the meantime the director of 2 LO (so familiar in his own world as "Uncle Rex" and now claiming a place in the gramophone world as Rex Palmer of the Columbia catalogue) has asked us to invite our readers to help him with suggestions for the "gramophone hour," when new records are broadcasted. Perhaps some of our famous programme-makers will try their hand—an hour's programme of records chosen from all the bulletins of the last three months, impartially, and each introduced by the few "first words" which will make it more intelligible to the listeners. Letters should be addressed to the Director, London Station, B.B.C., 2, Savoy Hill, London, W.C. 1.

THE BYRON OF MUSIC

By W. R. ANDERSON

"I FELT within me the god-like strength to win my way to that blessed hidden isle, where the temple of pure art raises its soaring columns to the sky." Thus Berlioz in bliss—at work on his *Romeo and Juliet* choral symphony. Hear him, too, in the depths, when the grand orchestral portrayal of the conflagration in *The Last Night of Sardanapalus* should have come to pass: "That damned horn . . . never came in. The drums were afraid to begin. . . . The violins went wobbling on with their futile tremolo, and my fire went out without one crackle! . . . Giving vent to a wild yell of rage, I flung my score smash into the middle of the band and knocked over two desks . . ."

So it was always—up to-day, down to-morrow. The psychologist and pathologist would now have much to say about this queerly ordered, volcanic mind; with the spirit—wayward, avid of beauty, imaginative, sensitive abnormally—we need alone be concerned. The smallest thing agitated him; sounds could move him to horror or to ecstasy. It was not an easy world into which Hector Berlioz came, though perhaps 1803 was a good year for a revolutionary to be born in. The years of young manhood in France were certainly propitious for a mind gathering force and passion like a tornado.

The country doctor's son, destined for his father's profession, got no further than the Medical School of Paris. One glimpse of the dissecting room, and he was out of the window and speeding home. Strange, perhaps, since he was to write more than one piece of music dealing pretty thoroughly in horrors! But the world of the imagination and that of reality are very different, and the hyper-sensitive Berlioz could not suffer to gaze upon the details of the "charnel house," as he called it. He did make another attempt at medicine, but music called irresistibly. One of his early idols was Gluck, who himself did his best to bring about a revolution (in opera), albeit it was more peacefully attended than that which Berlioz sought to achieve. He had, too, a passion for Shakespeare that halted not on this side idolatry. To that we owe the *King Lear* overture, and the *Romeo and Juliet* symphony. Perhaps, also, to this account partially belongs his unfortunate marriage with Henrietta Smithson, an Irish actress, who appeared in Paris in Shakespearean plays.

There could never be peace for long, for such a spirit. Berlioz' life was full of high emotion and conflict—elements that are reflected in almost everything he wrote. One of the most fascinating pieces of self-revelation is the little volume in

Dent's Everyman Library (2s.)—"The Life of Hector Berlioz"—a combination of selections from the autobiography and the letters of this blazing genius. It throws a flood of light on his music, and forms a good background for the understanding of the *Fantastic Symphony*, just recorded by H.M.V.

One of the things worth remembering, in hearing this sometimes extravagant music, is that the path of an innovator was not so easy a hundred years ago as it is now. It is pathetically simple to gain some notoriety in music in these days. You have only to play the piano with your elbows, or swing "thunder sticks" in an orchestra, or invent "lion roars," to get a hearing and bring delighted applause from the fools who live on sensation. Berlioz was sometimes a sensationalist, but he was a musician also—a man of culture, one of the greatest orchestral masters, a pioneer of "programme music," in whose steps Liszt, Strauss and the majority of composers since his day have, with individual variety of method, trod. If not all the things he did were quite worth doing, he brought off a far greater percentage of successes than most of the sensationalists of to-day. Critics were keen, and pedants more common than now. Berlioz, both at the Conservatoire and later, had to battle with them. At one time he was reduced to working at journalism for a living.

His *Fantastic Symphony* is only one of a number of works to which, in whole or in part, that adjective might be applied. Someone has called Berlioz the Byron of music. One might add a comparison with the visionary Poe, and find in various aspects of his work analogies with the strange imaginings of Le Fanu, of Bierce, of Blackwood, of Dunsany—of all who have dipped into the extravagant and the macabre. It would be a mistake, though, to regard him simply as a wild fellow, unbalanced and dangerous. That fine photograph that Hadow reproduces as the frontispiece to his first volume of "Studies in Modern Music" (Seeley) shows the student of faces at once that here is a man of brilliant intellect, of uncommon power and purpose, who has known sorrow and lacked sympathy.

In a brief article it is only possible, in addition to giving an outline of the *Fantastic*, to indicate a few other works that are fairly frequently to be heard, and to suggest some that might be recorded.

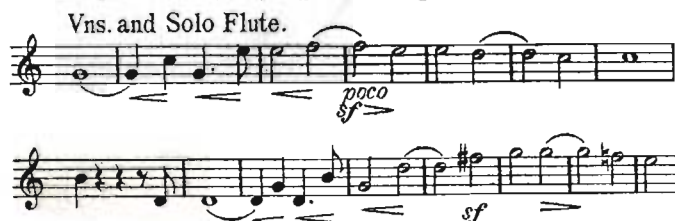
This symphony belongs to the year 1829, and was one outcome of the composer's delight in Goethe. He had been studying hard at the Conservatoire for seven years, under men who did not understand him, and had gained the Prix de Rome at the fifth attempt, with his *Sardanapalus*, of the lament-

able conclusion of which we have had a glimpse. All but the "grand conflagration" (added after the award of the prize) was cunningly written in the most academic style, to "play up to" the judges. He had well earned his visit to Rome, in accordance with the terms of the prize, there to study and compose.

The *Fantastic* is in five movements. Berlioz thought that the work could be heard for its purely musical interest, independent of all dramatic intention; but it would be a mistake to neglect the "plot." Music that has a literary basis cannot fairly be judged apart from the ideas which brought it into being, and that necessarily colour and condition it.

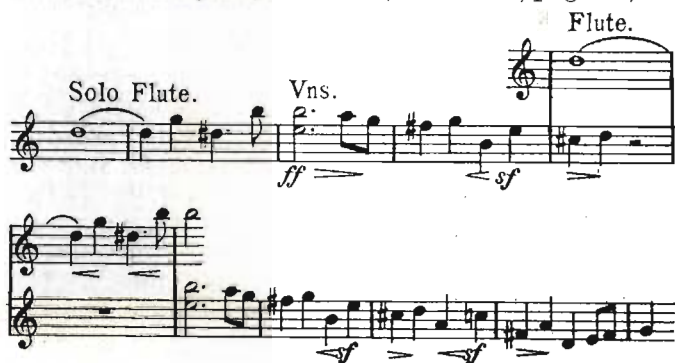
The story of this "Episode in the Life of an Artist" is told in a letter to his friend Ferrand (April 16th, 1830—unfortunately not given in the *Everyman* volume, but printed in the various editions of Berlioz' correspondence).

The *First Movement* is entitled *Reveries, Passions*. A young musician is pictured, in the *Adagio* introduction, musing upon his hopes of love. One can figure Berlioz himself as the hero, without difficulty. In the *Allegro agitato* which follows appears a theme, the *idée fixe*, representing the beloved one:—



Its second half has a yearning phrase, repeated several times. This theme appears in each movement, in some form or other. The device not only serves dramatic ends, but satisfies the formal requirement of all music—that of variety in unity. Without some such principle (observed in the older symphonic music by the recurrence in a single movement of two chief themes, and by a certain flexible key-scheme) any extended movement or entire work is spineless and ineffective.

Another theme used near the end of the first movement is introduced by the first few notes of the motto-subject (min. score, G. and T., page 19):—



Second Movement. (At a Ball.)—This is a valse, during which the lover stands apart and recalls his loved one's form and face. After the scene has been set some little time by an exceedingly enjoyable valse theme, the motto theme appears, on flute and oboe (p. 70), in the three-time of the dance. Towards the end of the movement the clarinet breathes this melody, until the valse breaks in on the reminiscence and sweeps all before it to a brilliant conclusion.

Third Movement. (Scenes in the Country.)—Shepherds' pipes (oboe and cor anglais) are heard. Flute and violin soon have a gently flowing air that gives the pastoral setting of the scene. The lover wanders in the twilight fields, meditating on his constant preoccupation. Beautiful touches of delicate wood-wind instrumentation create an atmosphere of peace, into which something of agitation creeps. Towards the end fragments of the motto theme are heard, and there is a hint of thunder in the air. The drums play rolls in chords, accompanying the opening shepherd's tune. The whole is a remarkable and lovely piece of musical scene- and mood-painting, illustrating the powers of "programme music" perhaps better than the other movements of the work, in which the composer may not unjustly be said to have striven to make music do more than it can achieve, in enhancing a poetic idea.

Fourth Movement. (March to the Gallows.)—The lover, drugged with opium, dreams that, having murdered the object of his affection, he is condemned to death. The March, in which two pairs of kettle-drums play important parts, opens with a syncopated figure for muted horns, very similar to a couple of bars near the end of the "beloved" theme. Ferocity is the note of the movement—its relentlessness suggested by the early theme (lower strings) that treads down two octaves of the scale. Here, as everywhere in the work, Berlioz displays his virtuosity in the handling of the orchestra. The theme of the beloved comes into the prisoner's mind for an instant, but the guillotine falls, and all is over—so far as the dream is concerned.

Fifth Movement. (Dream of a Witches' Sabbath.)—A still more terrible nightmare, for the loved one is transformed into an evil spirit. Her melody, once serenely beautiful, leers and cuts eldritch capers. There is a tolling of bells, and a satanic parody of the funeral hymn, the *Dies Irae* (tubas and bassoon). A mad dance of witches and warlocks ensues (this begins in the strings, imitating each other in turn), and after a time the *Dies Irae* is combined with this. So the ungodly revel progresses to a furious end.

As I have suggested, it is doubtful how far Berlioz has succeeded in this symphony (which, it must be remembered, is early work), in justifying musically his plot. There is, however, quite

sufficient interest and excitement in the music to make the work thoroughly welcome in recorded form.

Among other Berlioz records I find the following :

H.M.V.—Extracts from *The Damnation of Faust*: *Marche Hongroise* (Coldstream Guards), C.116; by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, D.151. Songs: *Mephistopheles' Serenade*, by Ruffo (D.A.164); by E. de Gorgoza, D.B.184; by Pol Plançon, D.A.340. *Nature immense* (Faust's soliloquy), by F. Anseau, D.B.487. *Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea*, by Plançon, D.A.340 (with the *Serenade*). *Voici des Roses*, by G. Baklanoff, D.A.467; in Italian, by Battistini, D.B.189.

COLUMBIA.—*Roman Carnival Overture and March from Faust*, L.1105 (Beecham, with his orchestra). *Rakoczy March (Faust)*, L.1405 (by Harty and the Hallé).

VOCALION.—*Roman Carnival Overture*, K.05102 (Military Band).

(The pronunciation of the composer's name given in the H.M.V. catalogue, by the way, is not quite correct. The *z* is sounded and the *o* is long—*Bäre-lee-ozh*.)

Other important works by Berlioz are the sequel to the *Fantastic—Lélio*, or *The Return to Life*, which uses a chorus as well as the orchestra; the *Harold in Italy Symphony*, in which the *idée fixe* principle is again employed—a solo viola suggesting the wandering Harold; the *Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale* (military band, strings and chorus ad lib.); overtures: *Les Francs-Juges*, *King Lear*, *The Roman Carnival*, *The Corsair*, *Rob Roy*, *Waverley* (on Scott's novels), and choral works—the *Mass*, *Te Deum*, the oratorio *The Childhood of Christ*, and lesser works. There are operas—*Beatrice and Benedict* (of which we might have the overture recorded), *Benvenuto Cellini*, and *The Trojans*, a remarkable work, in two parts—*The Taking of Troy* and *The Trojans at Carthage*.

It would be good to have one or two more overtures recorded—say *Cellini*, and one or other of the Scott works. *King Lear* is rather disappointing, I feel. Then we certainly ought to have some extracts from *The Trojans*, since there seems no chance of hearing it on our stage, though Paris has it. The *Royal Hunt and Storm*, a fine bit of orchestral painting, has been done now and again at the Proms and elsewhere, and a March is sometimes given; but really representative extracts are wanted, of the vocal work also.

There are not many songs outside the operas, but more than one is well worthy of reproduction on a disc—for instance, the splendid *La Captive*. *Harold* (with Tertis as solo violist) might be attractive; and one or two things from *The Childhood of Christ* would be liked by all—a charming carol, in particular. From *Romeo* we ought by all means to have the amazing *Queen Mab Scherzo*—perhaps the loveliest bit of thistledown fairy-music the mind of man ever conceived. These for a start. It is just possible that something I mention may have been recorded, but I do not see any of these items in the catalogues of British firms.

The lover of good writing about music should not forget Berlioz' literary work, which is published in several volumes (see the Bibliography in the Everyman book). His work on Instrumentation is a classic. His short treatise on Conducting is published (in English) by Wm. Reeves, at 1s. 6d. To the Everyman list of books add "Musical Studies," Newman (Lane); some letters in Jos. Bennett's "Forty Years of Music," and in J. W. Davison's "From Mendelssohn to Wagner."

Fuller information as to editions of his music (the standard one is by Breitkopf) and literary work is to be found in the entries under Berlioz in Pratt's "New Encyclopædia of Music" (Macmillan), and in the "Dictionary of Modern Music" (Dent).

W. R. ANDERSON.

Our reviewer, "N. P." adds this note on the H.M.V. records:—

"My suggestion that Mr. Harty should record this work has been anticipated by the conductor of the Concerts Pasdeloups, Monsieur Rhené Baton, known to us chiefly by some of his charming songs. The first appearance of a French orchestra of such eminence on the H.M.V. list is of great interest. The founder of this orchestra was also a conductor (1861) and introduced Berlioz, Gounod, Massenet, Saint-Saëns, with many other now famous composers. Wagner in particular, to the Paris public; Rhené Baton took over command in 1920. The recording is not up to the standard of our premier companies, nor, so far as one can judge from the records and one's knowledge of the orchestra, is the latter nearly as good an organisation as, for instance, the Hallé or the Royal Albert Hall orchestras. In short, the English companies' high standard remains unshaken.

The first movement is by far the least successful. There are many weak patches of tone and the balance is poor, while little of the delicacy of tone intended by the composer at certain points is retained. The second movement, excepting for the failure of the harp's *arpeggi* to come through at the start, is much better; the tone and rhythmic swing of the strings being really fine. Berlioz

wrote the *Marche au Supplice* in a day, but spent some laborious weeks over the "Scène aux champs." The music shows it. It is, so far as I am concerned, a dullish piece of work. The tone of oboe and cor anglais is very uneven, but the movement is fairly successful. The *Marche au Supplice* would have been a big success if only the brass had any bite in them. They sound very emasculated—not a usual fault in French orchestras. Otherwise the music has come out well; that horrid capering bassoon especially so. The timpani are no better nor worse than they usually are. The last movement is a real triumph and everyone who collects orchestral records must hasten to buy it. It is true that Berlioz' amazing orchestration was almost bound to record well, but one must pay a tribute to the recorders. At one moment the wood-wind give an almost human howl which I have never heard in performance, but which, I imagine, is what the composer intended! The general coarseness of the wood-wind is in place here. One wishes the brass had greater brilliance, but the whirling strings compensate somewhat in the passage I have in mind. The interpretation, as recorded, lacks delicacy; picturesque effects are thrown into high relief at the expense of detail. Still the issue of the work shows a most laudable enterprise and cannot fail to interest a large public."



MADAME ALMA GLUCK.

GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

X.—Madame Alma Gluck

By B. D. WRATTEN

MADAME ALMA GLUCK was born in Bucharest, Roumania, but she may not be considered a Roumanian in anything more than instinct, as she came to America at the age of six. The influence of this "racial instinct" is not strong, but it is perceptible, particularly in the occasional flavour of the East to be discerned in the high notes. In her art we have the advantages of this "Slav instinct" cultivated by Western teaching. The result is that she takes a very broad view of music in general. She did not study singing seriously until she had reached a comparatively mature age; another and very important factor in an art which exhibits unusual versatility and intelligence. Paradoxically, it is in the *Darkie Songs* of the Southern States of America that she had especially endeared herself to the multitudes!

There is a decided "personal" quality about Alma Gluck's voice; it cannot be compared with that of any other soprano who has made records. I have said that there is an unusual breadth in her musical view-point due to the Western training and the Eastern origin of the singer. This Eastern quality is more apparent in her voice than in her interpretation, for it lends a delightful softness and *body* to what might have been a hard and colourless voice. Her high notes exhibit that very slightly throttled feeling so characteristic of the Russian *soprani*; but it must not be inferred that her voice sounds constricted; it acquires a delicacy and roundness almost impossible to describe. This is well shown in her record of *L'heure exquise*. The singer's personality is as fresh and charming as her voice; there is a bright simplicity about it which immediately endears her to her audience. This freshness is splendidly preserved by her records and all her songs which have been recorded have a lively spontaneity of feeling entirely free from effort or from pose. It would not do deliberately to create the impression that she is perfect in her singing. She is but human. There is occasionally a weakness in her rhythm or a jerkiness in her phrases. The defects are not great, but they are quite sufficient to spoil such a song as the *Braes of Balquhiddy* (D.A.517), and its companion song on the reverse side.

Alma Gluck made a large number of excellent records when she was at the height of her powers.

Her voice recorded well and if she was inclined to sing more of the popular songs of the day it cannot be put down as her lack of taste. In her gramophone repertoire will be found music to suit all tastes. I must confess that there is, for me, a considerable preponderance of objectionable sentimental stuff; but there are some gems in the slush.

There is a quaint story about the manner in which Alma Gluck was "discovered." I cannot vouch for its accuracy. Her first husband was Mr. Barney Glick. It was Mrs. Glick's custom daily to take out her small daughter in a perambulator. One afternoon the baby seems to have been rather tiresome, for its mother had to resort to singing it to sleep. A lady who was passing was impressed by the beauty of the singer's voice and immediately invited her to come and sing at a "Musical Evening" that was being held that night. Mrs. Glick accepted the invitation. As a direct result of her singing that evening she came into contact with the famous *impresario*, Gatti-Casazza. He advised her to take up the study of singing in earnest and she acted on his advice. Almost the whole of her musical studies took place in America, but there were a few finishing touches in Europe. The name of Gluck is a modification of her "married name" of Glick.

Madame Alma Gluck's first important engagement was with the New Theatre, New York, in the 1907-08 season. She created a sensation by her singing of the rôle of *Sophie* in *Werther*. This success is evidence in itself of her proficiency in her art, for there are few who will deny that Massenet gave little scope for display in his representation of the highly virtuous heroine. She made her English debut in the year 1913 in a series of concerts. She had an immediate success; the *furor* she caused can only be compared with the recent triumphs of Giannini. She received lavish praise from the English critics and many compared her with Melba and with Patti.

Although she had several very successful seasons at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, her greatest triumphs have been gained on the concert platform; the most popular items on her programmes being almost invariably such Plantation Ballads as *Old Black Joe* and *My old Kentucky home, Good-night*. Seeing that the larger proportion of her career has been spent on the concert plat-

form it is yet another example of her extraordinary versatility that she should be able to turn so easily from stage to concert platform and back again.

Alma Gluck married Efrem Zimbalist a few years ago. He was one of the famous pupils of Professor Auer. She has been in retirement for some years, but recently there came the pleasant news that she had re-appeared on the platform and was touring the United States.

I have been forced in classifying the records for this article to create two distinct classes—the first for the records of music of the better type of music; the second for music of the class calculated to make the *highbrow* higher.

In the 1924 catalogue her beautiful record of Rameau's *Rossignols amoureux* was missing, but it is now reinstated, coupled with the considerably less delightful *Listen to the Mocking bird*. It was hardly tactful for the Gramophone Company to have arranged this for I am sure that many will be frightened away from the imitation bird voices in the *Mocking bird*. On the Victor list the *Mocking bird* affair is coupled up with *Home Sweet Home*, an arrangement I consider far more suitable.

There are a series of delightful duets with Reimers which with one single exception are unobtainable in England. I suppose this is because they are sung in German, but for those who admire Alma Gluck's voice I would recommend the charming record of Tchaikowsky's *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*.

The records in each of the two classes are those I consider the better of their type. I have placed them in what I think to be the correct order of merit technically and vocally. The first records in each group are safe to buy without hesitation. Certain of the good records are brought near the bottom of the lists by the poorer quality of the reverse.

For anyone wishing to choose his first Alma Gluck record I would recommend one of the Operatic records to his choice. All the Operatic solos are good, particularly the two little *Snow Maiden* pieces (record D.A.486).

Many of the duets with Homer are also excellent, whilst the best of the duets with Zimbalist is *Du mit deiner fidel* (D.B. 593).

In conclusion I should like to express my gratitude towards the Gramophone Company's patience in allowing me to hear the records.

CLASS 1.

In these lists the prefix D.A. indicates a 10in. record; D.B. a 12in.

- D.A.486.—*Aller au Bois (The Snow Maiden); Song of the Shepherd Lehl (The Snow Maiden)*.
 D.B.593.—*Du mit deiner fidel* (duet with Zimbalist).
 D.A.233.—*Chanson Hindoue; Tu! (A song of Havana)*.

D.B.279.—*Depuis le jour où je me suis donnée; Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante*.

D.A.236.—*La Serenata (Tosti); La Colomba*.

D.B.663.—*Ah! Non credea mirarti (Sonnambula); Parla! (vocal waltz)*.

D.B.278.—*Oh, sleep! why dost thou leave me?; Angels ever bright and fair*.

D.A.519.—*Le Bonheur est chose légère* (duet with Zimbalist); *Romance Orientale* (duet with Zimbalist).

D.A.227.—*Musetta's waltz song (La Bohème); Addio di Mimi (La Bohème)*.

D.A.240.—*L'heure exquise; Two folk songs of Little Russia*.

D.A.238.—*Hark! Hark the lark; The Brook*.

D.A.449.—*Elegie (Massenet)* (duet with Zimbalist); *In the hour of trial* (duet with Zimbalist).

D.B.478.—*I waited for the Lord* (duet with Homer); *Mira, O Norma!* (duet with Homer).

D.A.237.—*The lass with the delicate air; When love is kind*.

CLASS 2.

D.B.573.—*Fiddle and I* (duet with Zimbalist); *Sing me to sleep* (duet with Zimbalist).

D.B.572.—*The Lost Chord* (duet with Zimbalist); *Le Nil* (duet with Zimbalist).

D.A.453.—*Belle nuit, O nuit d'amour* (duet with Homer); *Life's dream is o'er* (duet with Homer).

D.A.234.—*From the land of the sky-blue water; Will o' the wisp*.

D.B.280.—*The Mother's Prayer; She wandered down the mountain side*.

D.A.235.—*Bird of the wilderness; Such a little fellow*.

D.A.158.—*O that we two were maying* (duet with Homer); *Whispering Hope* (duet with Homer).

D.A.451.—*Abide with me* (duet with Homer); *I need Thee every hour* (duet with Homer).

D.A.450.—*Old folks at home; The Rosary*.

D.B.275.—*Old Black Joe; Carry me back to old Virginny!*

D.B.277.—*My old Kentucky home; Aloha Oe!*

B. D. WRATTEN.

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ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON, M.A. (Oxon)

Formerly Instructor in Applied Mathematics at the R.N. Engineering College

ON this page it is proposed from time to time to discuss constructional and technical matters in connexion with the gramophone. The object will be two-fold. In the first place, advice will be given on the details of gramophone adjustment, which mean so much in the attainment of good reproduction. If the more sophisticated readers find at times that the matters dealt with are of too elementary a character, I trust that for the sake of their humbler brethren they will suffer patiently. Those of us who are accustomed to walk with our heads in the air sometimes forget to "mind the step." In the second place I hope that as time goes on it will be possible to build up some comprehensive theory of gramophone design based upon sound mechanical and acoustical principles as well as upon orderly experiment. In this I shall draw not only upon my own experience, which after all is very limited, but also upon that of a wide circle of gramophonic friends. Readers are asked to assist in the project by being ready both to ask questions and to pass criticism. Questions whether simple or difficult, and criticism whether confirmatory or adverse, will be welcomed.

I shall not attempt here to go into mathematical details, though no definite conclusion will be stated unless it can be supported both by theory and by experiment. The simplest problems in the theory of sound involve mathematics of so intricate a character that one is bound to make assumptions which will simplify the analysis. It is precisely here that the danger of pure theory (if there is such a thing) lies. The simplification may be carried to unnatural extremes or may even be one which has no foundation in reality. In either case the theoretical conclusion may be very far from the actual truth; at the best it can but be an approximation. On the other hand, the man who depends solely upon experiment for his knowledge of affairs is apt to make very slow progress and to arrive at conclusions which are only valid under the special conditions under which his experiments have been made. Occasionally an experimenter makes a discovery of a revolutionary kind which modifies all our preconceived ideas. But these accidents are rare and the full value of them is only realised when they have been assimilated into a well-ordered theory. The invention of the gramophone itself was an accident of this kind. I have recently been introduced to

another one which may have equally far-reaching results. On the other hand, Clerk Maxwell had forecasted and worked out the theory of "wireless" many years before it was actually discovered. As a general rule, however, it may safely be asserted that substantial progress is only made when experiment is ordered and regulated by theoretical ideas.

We must beware of jumping to hasty conclusions on limited experience and equally we must beware of stretching elementary theory beyond the assumptions which made it elementary. Much of the criticism which has been directed against goose-neck tone-arms and much of the advocacy of the romantic 65 m.m. sound-box is of this character. In the seventies Lord Rayleigh, when dealing with particular properties of sounds of relatively high pitch, introduced the conception of a "ray" of sound, and since that time we have been only too ready to forget that sounds, and particularly those of low pitch, do not confine themselves to a straight line path: one can hear a sound round a corner where one cannot see a light. In gramophone design too much emphasis has been laid upon the reflection of sound and too little upon means of ensuring that the diaphragm will resonate properly to vibrations of varying pitch which the record is capable of imparting to it.

In this review I once rashly committed myself to the assertion that the straight tone-arm is undoubtedly superior to other types. During the past six months my investigations, both theoretical and practical, have led me to modify that view very considerably. Of this I propose to write on a future occasion. At the moment I will only remark that I am now using an external horn H.M.V. model No. 25 for vocal and orchestral records, and an internal horn model of my own adaptation for chamber music and strings. With both I use Vitz boxes and fibre needles and both tone-arms have parallel-sided goose-necks. The reproduction is still in miniature, it is true. But I am content to have it so until I can obtain realist results with perfect balance in some way which will also give natural volume without blast or harshness and without undue wear of records. I do not despair of getting even this. Indeed, I have very good reason for thinking that we shall get it before long.

P. WILSON.

THAT OPERA BOX

THE times are ripe for a National Opera supported by endowments or by a Government subsidy. From all sides the accumulative evidence comes which will make the long-needed impulse to achievement. Hard on the heels of the announcement of the National Opera Trust, which is to support any English Opera Company which can substantiate a claim for assistance, came the Duke of Devonshire's appeal for purchasing Sadler's Wells as a North London counterpart for the Old Vic. But perhaps even more significant was the letter written by Riccardo Stracciari to the *Daily Telegraph* (April 4th). "It is always the stranger who sees how the bambino has grown, and as it is ten years since I sang at your Covent Garden perhaps I may take the part of the stranger and congratulate the British public on the flourishing condition of what has sometimes been considered her ugly duckling. Before the war we of 'The Garden' knew that the brilliant house before us held, in the course of a season, practically every musical enthusiast in the country; when I return from my world wanderings to-day I find that it has overflowed into the nation's homes. Fitted with the wireless and the gramophone, every British drawing-room is that much-coveted apartment—a private box at the opera. Now, nowhere else in Europe have I encountered since the war such a popular demand for fine music. . . . As regards the gramophone, the sale of records is the best barometer of public taste, and I know from my experience that the interest in operatic music so expressed has increased beyond belief during the last decade. . . ."

With regard to the last sentence the fundamental consideration was emphasised by Mr. de Lara in the article which he contributed to these pages last month. It is that (no matter what the effect of wireless and the gramophone may be as regards the future of concert halls) the more familiar you become with operatic music on the gramophone record and the loud-speaker, the more pressing becomes the desire to see the whole opera performed with the full setting of movement, scenery and lighting.

The time has come when the Government should appoint a Committee to inquire not whether a State-subsidised Opera House is practicable, but how it may best be instituted *at once*. The time has come for someone with prestige, integrity and vision to undertake to co-ordinate the various interests and to provide the unifying impulse to

achievement. The great thing is to get the work done and not to mind who gets the credit.

In the meanwhile we have urged all our readers who view the matter as we view it to support Mr. de Lara's scheme for an Imperial and Permanent Opera House. We want at any rate to qualify for the box in that Opera House, dedicated to THE GRAMOPHONE in perpetuity, which Mr. de Lara has promised to give if our readers raise the sum of £4,000. Whether Mr. de Lara's scheme in its entirety is ever accomplished, or whether it is eventually merged with the other schemes—whether in the event of an opera house being built it will be *possible* for this promise of a perpetual box to be kept—it does not matter. Our ambition and pride are to be able to say, "The readers of THE GRAMOPHONE signified with the utmost clearness their willingness to support a scheme for a permanent opera."

What is the scheme? This has been fully explained in the last two numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE.

What do we ask you to do? To send the sum of One Pound—in a cheque, a postal order, a Treasury Note, in quarterly instalments, in whatever form you like—to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1, in an envelope marked "Opera Scheme," with the least possible delay. *Do it at once*. A fair number of readers have already sent their Pounds (including every member of the Office Staff!). The first list of donors will be printed in the next number, and for the credit of all we want it to be a long one.

What happens to your money? It is sent to the Bank of Liverpool and Martin's, 68, Lombard Street. We give you our guarantee that not a penny of that money will be touched until either Mr. de Lara's scheme comes off or else until it fails. If in our judgment the moment comes when success is assured the total sum contributed by readers will be handed over to Mr. de Lara and his trustees. If in our judgment the moment comes when the scheme has to be abandoned, we shall return to you every penny that you have subscribed.

It is not easy to think of a fairer proposition than this. *But* if we are justified in the hopes expressed above, it is most important that the tangible support should be given *at once*. The foolish only will wait to see which way the cat jumps; the wise will unite to *make* it jump in the desired direction!

Some Unrecorded Orchestral Works

By HAROLD F. BISS

WHEN we take a retrospective survey of all that THE GRAMOPHONE has done for the intellectual musical world in influencing the recording of many complete versions of the great symphonies, chamber works, and concerti, we can hardly grumble if certain works have escaped the notice of the recording companies. To record everything would be as difficult a task as it was for Heracles to secure and bring to earth Cerberus, the three-headed dog of the Inferno. I hope that the companies will give their favourable consideration to a few of the following works.

ELGAR.

The greatest living British composer is not by any means well represented in the record catalogues. Besides the Enigma Variations, the 'Cello Concerto, and a few other works recorded in their entirety, many are abridged more than is necessary. So far as I am aware, no records exist of his symphonies, both of which, though not often heard, are inspired works of a great musical genius. If the Vocalion Co. can record McEwen's "Solway" Symphony in three d.s. records, surely Elgar's Symphonies are worthy of attention. Incidentally, I wonder why the B minor Violin Concerto has been removed from the H.M.V. catalogue.

BORODINE.

The Second Symphony of Borodine is a work for which many of us have waited with undying patience. It has a conception coincidental with that of "Prince Igor," betraying a strong "Mediaeval Russian" influence in the composer's mind. The *Allegro Moderato* 4-4 announces the first theme, a solemn and grave summons, suggestive of the archaic splendour of the old Russian princes of the eleventh century, and is given out by the strings in unison. This is followed later by an "answering phrase" on the wood-wind.

After the return of the first theme in augmentation and later, in combination with the second, a serenely peaceful pastoral melody of infinite tenderness is heard. The first and second themes are later subjected to a transformation to the bass instruments, and in the working-out section are somewhat modified by ingenious rhythmic treatment. The movement ends with the opening subject given out *fortissimo* in unison—a wonderfully impressive close.

The Second Movement, *Molto-vivo* 4-4, shows some clever string writing and in the *Trio* an oboe

solo forms the melodic basis, the orchestral colour brightening, enhanced by triangle and harp effects.

The Third Movement, built upon the Pentatonic Scale, reminds one of the old Celtic folk-tunes, with their dreamy sadness: and the fourth, *Allegro* 3-4 and 2-4, portrays a gay atmosphere with clever scoring for flute and clarinet, ending with a *coda* based upon the introductory themes.

GLUCK.

A most interesting Orchestral Suite, arranged by Felix Mottl, who describes it as "a free paraphrase" of certain numbers of Gluck's operas, is the "Suite de Ballet, No. 1." It is in four movements and could be conveniently contained upon two double-sided records. The movements occur as follows:

1. Derived from Intro. to "Don Juan"; the "Air Gai" and a slow movement from "Iphigenia in Aulis."
2. "Danse of the Blessed Spirits in Elysium" from "Orfeo."
3. "Musette" from "Armida."
4. A second "Air Gai" and a "Sicilienne" from "Armida."

GLAZOUNOV.

"Two Preludes for Orchestra."—These form two fine examples of orchestration and are scored for flutes, piccolo, three oboes, clarinets, bassoons, contra bassoon, horn, trumpets, trombone, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, gong, harp, pianoforte, and strings, a combination which should prove an interesting research for the recording room experts. The first prelude is entitled "To the memory of Vladimir Stassov" (1824-1906), and the second "To the memory of N. Rimsky-Korsakov" (1844-1908). The first opens with a theme in leaping thirds, the drum supplying a rhythmic figure, over which the melody is played by the strings, a series of trills being sustained by the wood-wind. A chant-like theme succeeds this on the full brass. An emotional climax is reached later, followed by a series of broken chords for harp, pianoforte, and wood-wind, the gloomy note of the gong being heard as the chords die away.

In the second prelude the piccolo, third oboe, triangle, and pianoforte are dropped and a *cor anglais*, bass clarinet, and tuba added, the bass drum taking the place of the percussion group. It is altogether a more complicated threnody than the last prelude. Commencing *Andante lugubre*, a semiquaver figure descends and rises chromatically

within the interval of a diminished fifth. After a pause, by some brilliant passage-work, a curious effect is obtained by laying the edge of one cymbal over another, both being suspended, while the edge of the under cymbal is struck with a drumstick, producing a tremolo effect. Space will not permit any further description of these fine works, but before I leave Glazounov, I would like to draw attention to his fascinating Ballet Suite, "Les Saisons."

GEORGE BUTTERWORTH.

The "Shropshire Lad" Rhapsody has been admirably recorded by the H.M.V., but no records have yet been made of the "Two English Idylls" or the "Banks of Green Willow"—works which will strongly appeal to all lovers of English folk-music.

TURINA.

The Columbia Co. has given us two fine records of Turina's "Danzas Fantasticas," but his Symphonic Poem, "La Procecion du Rocio," is a work which would, if recorded, easily attain popularity. It is in two movements: (1) "Triana en Fete," and

(2) "La Procecion": the whole depicting Triana, a suburb of Seville, holiday making, the brilliant orchestration being described by Debussy as "a luminous fresco."

LALO.

Norwegian Rhapsody.—This work, dedicated to the composer's friend, M. Edouard Colonne, is in two movements: (1) *Andantino*, and (2) *Presto*. It is founded chiefly upon Scandinavian folk-tunes, the orchestration being brilliant and effective.

INA BOYLE.

Miss Boyle's Rhapsody for Orchestra, "The Magic Harp," enjoys the distinction of a place in the "Carnegie Collection of British Music," and is based upon a poem by Eva Gore-Booth, founded upon the old Irish legend of the Duro-Alba.

RUTLAND BOUGHTON.

A *complete* version in album form of the "Immortal Hour" has long been overdue and should be a fine source of revenue to whichever company brings it out first.

HAROLD F. BISS.



Polydor Records.

Correspondence shows that the interest in these records is on the increase, and that remarkably enterprising as well as efficient neighbour of ours, Messrs. Alfred Imhof, of 110, New Oxford Street, who is the London agent for them is sending us the titles that are kept in stock, so that we can have them reviewed. It is a good thing to notice that the prices are now lower than those given in our March number. Several of our readers have sent us copies of some injudicious leaflets circulated—behind our back, so to speak—by one of our then advertisers on the subject of Polydor records; but we do not propose to take any action in the matter at present, except to refuse such viperine advertisements in future. One of Bacon's essays begins appositely thus: "It was prettily devised of Æsop 'The fly sat on the chariot wheel and said, "See what a great dust I make."'"

* * *

Do you know this Shop?

The hint given to our provincial readers in the last number has brought us a flood of further guesses as to the identity of the "famous music shop" described by one of our correspondents in the March number; but only one correct solution reached us on the third of the month—from Mr. H. Needham, 122,

St. Anne Street, Chester, who has therefore received the modest prize of a parcel of records. The answer was:—

MESSRS. JAMES SMITH AND SONS, LTD.,
76-72, LORD STREET,
LIVERPOOL.

and to that firm we offer our congratulations for having deserved the signal honour of so warm an appreciation from grateful clients.

At the same time it would be manifestly unfair to withhold equal congratulations and honourable mention from those other "famous music shops" to which their clients attributed the same characteristics of wisdom and efficiency; and to the list of guesses mentioned in the April number we now add the following: Messrs. Scotcher & Sons, 59 and 61, Corporation Street, Birmingham; Davis's Music Stores, 3-7, The Arcade, Lord Street, Liverpool; Keith, Prowse and Co., New Bond Street and Cheapside, London; Rushworth and Dreaper, Liverpool; Sir Herbert Marshall & Sons, Deansgate, Manchester, and Regent Street, London; Jake Graham, Liverpool; Price's, The Arcade, Bournemouth; the Aeolian Hall, New Bond Street, London; and Messrs. Large and Sons, Whitehall Street, Dundee. We are glad to know that all these firms make a special feature of THE GRAMOPHONE; and are grateful too, to our correspondent, Mr. James Hanley, of Liverpool, who first drew attention to Messrs. James Smith and Sons.

THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. It is proposed to publish a selection each month, and to offer prizes for the three best articles every quarter. The decision will rest with our readers, who will in due course be invited to record their votes. Articles should in no case exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written *very* legibly. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.

ON A WEST AFRICAN RIVER

By E. D. WARD

I AM writing this in a poling barge, miles away up Nigeria's largest river. There are only two distractions—reading and playing the gramophone. Before leaving England I took the precaution to buy a good table-grand gramophone and an ample supply of records. What I should do without them I cannot imagine. Day after day I am poled along, day after day the landscape is limited to water, sand and scrub, and the gramophone is the only proof that any other world exists at all.

My musical education has, I fear, been neglected, and my tastes are varied in the extreme. The records range from grand opera to the latest jazz, and are nearly all chosen for their associations more than for any other reason. I fancy, if the truth be known, that most unmusical persons make their selection (perhaps unconsciously) on the same principle.

The native crew of the barge consists of eight polers forward and my personal staff aft—a “boy” and a cook, the captain of the polers, and his wife, who cooks for the crew. I live in solitary state in a partitioned-off compartment amidships. The gramophone is as much a delight to the natives as it is to me, but their preferences in records are even more amazing than my own. A Hawaiian guitar selection, which is something akin to their own music, leaves them cold. My favourite Geraldine Farrar song is received with the chilling criticism, “Them missis make too much noise.” Two records only meet with unqualified approval—a rather sentimental little song called *Just because the violets*, and *The Bugle calls of*

the British Army. The crew are nearly all ex-soldiers of the West African Field Force and it amuses them to pick out familiar bugle calls, but why the other I cannot attempt to explain.

In these remote spots a gramophone is almost a necessity; apart from the pleasure given, it certainly has a civilising influence. It is very restful to sit over a “sundowner,” listening to the latest from Town and recalling past pleasures, or, better still, anticipating pleasures to come, and one does not feel entirely cut off from E.H. & B., i.e., the accepted abbreviation in these parts for England, Home and Beauty.

A native “boy” can soon be trained to work and care for the machine—in fact he enjoys doing so, but the first essential is a really first-class instrument. The damp tropical heat will soon find out cheap cabinet work and insufficiently tempered springs. With a little ingenuity any small repairs, to which even the best of machines are liable, can be effected quite simply. The broken mica of a sound-box, for instance, can be replaced by many things—photographic film, a thin slip of ivory, or even a visiting card. I have before now replaced broken governor springs with bits from the main-spring of an old typewriter.

A good machine, treated with reasonable care and attention, will easily last the eighteen months that one spends at a time in this country, and will still be sufficiently serviceable to hand over to the next man, if he has been foolish enough to come unprovided.

E. D. WARD.

JAZZ AND ITS SUCCESSOR

By ROBERT L. BIGG

HOW many people in using the word “jazz” have paused to consider what it actually means? In the first days of “jazz” in this country we had bands like the Southern Syncopated and Dixieland Orchestras. The latter gave birth in England to “jazz” in its real, accepted form. The word, as the music then implied, means “madd,” and the mutilated tunes of those days justified its meaning. The public in general, that is to say, the youthful element, embraced “jazz” with open arms; it was an innovation. An orgy of American dance bands invaded this country. Having made its hideous début, “jazz” proceeded to rule the roost for some considerable time before one or two enterprising, far-sighted men proved to the public that dancing or listening to the loudest screeches (emanating from the loudest kind of brass) could be considerably improved upon.

Art Hickman, with his five men, at the Criterion, was the first to teach us that “jazz” was a hooligan—a thing to be

despised and banished—and in its place he gave us what is now, and what *ought* to be called, Syncopation. With his saxophones and trombones, and their novel laughing or weeping effects (in those days they *were* a novelty), he instituted in London syncopation in a mild and rather jolly form; so was sounded the death-knell of “jazz”—that word which even Mr. Percy Scholes applies to our modern dances.

After Hickman the influence of Whiteman made itself felt over here. Dance masters and musicians discovered in his music a wonderful sense of rhythm, combined with perfectly-sustained harmony. Hitherto prolonged harmonic chords in a dance tune had not been employed; with Whiteman's advent we at last had something really melodious, and at the same time lilting, to dance to; as witness in some of his earlier works: *Just a little love song* (H.M.V. B.1332), *Everybody sleep*, *Ka-lu-a* (B.1397). In the latter record there is a solo by a Hawaiian guitar, the effect of which is very pleasing.

Starting from *The Japanese Sandman*, the first Whiteman

record in the H.M.V. catalogue, we follow the slow fox-trot through a somewhat hazardous, yet always improving, process, until we arrive at *Doo Wacka Doo* (B.1937), one of the most efficient orchestrations written during the past two years.

Compare the two—*The Japanese Sandman* (B.1160) and *Doo Wacka Doo*—and notice the immense strides that have been made with regard to the rhythm; yet both these melodies can be considered as excellent for the respective years in which they were written.

People to-day say that the noise in a dance orchestra becomes monotonous after a time. They must remember that the noise in the days of the Dixieland Jazz Band was worse, and not merely monotonous, but distracting. Therefore bands are far better to-day than they were—say eight or ten years ago. That is logic, but it proves that the public objects to noise without some sort of music attached to it; in fact, the more melodious, smoother kind of melodies have a wider appeal to-day.

I will admit that the noise which so many persons complain about is unnecessary when it issues from trumpets. I cannot conceive why good dance bands do not cut the trumpets out; in my opinion they spoil a tune every time; and doubly so when muted. After all, these instruments are neither any use in playing solos nor in accompanying because the most they do is to wheeze out staccato notes. The trombones could do all the trumpet work in a band; moreover, a trombone can carry out a solo, an accompaniment, or butt in with novelty effects, whilst one has the additional advantage of listening to a tolerably good instrument. Still, I have stated that bands are improving. In a few years we shall have ideal organisations, no doubt, with ideal musicians in them. A combination like the following is my idea of an ideal dance orchestra: Three saxophones, two 'cellos, two pianos, one oboe, one clarinet, two trombones, one banjo, and percussion.

It will be noticed that out of these there is not one trumpet or violin. The trumpet has just undergone criticism, and as for the fiddle, this is really another unnecessary asset in an

orchestra, since it is usually a squeaky one, which reminds me too much of the sort one hears at a third-rate cinema. The two 'cellos would substitute and give gratifyingly pleasant results, and along with the banjo, two pianos, and saxophones, would supply the "straight" melody, whilst the two trombones, clarinet and drums would do the "stunting." An ensemble like this, under proficient hands, would possess a rich, mellow depth throughout, and would record well.

Now we return to the point at which we started, that "jazz" belongs to a bygone day. Those highbrows who disregard the possibilities of syncopated music, but ever extol an era of dead men, must not forget that in composers like Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, or Brahms we shall not possibly have their equal for hundreds of years. In a reactionary era, in which the feverish desire for enjoyment predominates, it behoves the natural law of events that a new form of art must eclipse the "classic era" until the latter reasserts itself. This art lies in syncopated music; whereby the dance of to-day is an art in itself. Nobody can deny that it is far more difficult to play a clarinet with impromptu effects than it is to play a clarinet from a symphonic score. Nowadays a musician combines the two. Again, it is harder to "rag" a harp or 'cello than it is to play either of these instruments ordinarily.

A point worth noting is the fact that many wood-wind, string, and percussion players have migrated to the Rhythm World, not only because of better remuneration, but because they realise the artistic possibilities of the syncopated orchestra.

Syncopation is an art that will flourish and assume an evolutionary position, despite what high, low, or middle brows have to say about it, for it is an entertaining art which need not interfere with our serious moods, whose capacity will perhaps only absorb the genius of Chopin; in other words it is a direct, inexpensive pleasure to the country.

Thus is pointed out the difference between "jazz" and "syncopation."

ROBERT L. BIGG.

The RIGHT GRAMOPHONE for CHAMBER MUSIC

By JOHN C. W. CHAPMAN

OPEN confession is good for the soul, 'tis said. Therefore, if you deride me when I state that prior to 1924 I had the bad taste to dislike Chamber Music, read this avowal of my conversion, for it may point a moral. Out of folly cometh wisdom—sometimes!

I am pretty tenacious in my views, and not easily turned from rooted likes or dislikes; but, when I do perceive I am proceeding on wrong lines, things happen. And so when I first heard the Lener Quartet on my friend D.'s Kestraphone—D. is a rare fellow who invariably imperils my last train, tram, or 'bus by starting to play the best of his five hundred excellent discs at or about midnight's witching hour—I realised that why I had failed to like chamber music was because I had never heard it under the right conditions before. My acclamations were proportionately divided amongst music, artists, Columbia New Process (fibre played), and Kestraphone. Here at last was real chamber music; pure, lovely, natural string tone, with surprising definition and absolutely without surface noise! I was delighted to find that my appreciation had been merely dormant, and not non-existent, as I had feared! I also realised that the time had come for me to extensively overhaul my gramophonic scheme of things.

How I did so I described in *THE GRAMOPHONE* of last September. It did not take me long to discover that my

Gargantuan thoroughbred table grand, yclept the Mahogany Monster, specialised in chamber music; and it is almost superfluous to say that the Lener Quartet were responsible for my first "snippets." I, for one, decline to believe in the possibility of a more exquisite rendition of the most beautiful music than these richly-gifted artists afford. But I did not surrender completely to the lure of the celestial until I possessed two complete string quartets. The enforced leisure of an illness gave me an insight into the austere purity, nobility, and true beauty of chamber music I might otherwise have lacked. Instead of casually listening, I concentrated; I endeavoured to analyse intricacies and to focus my mind entirely on the music. Frequently, I became so absorbed that the gramophonic element was entirely forgotten, the necessary tasks to enable the concert to go on being performed quite mechanically. But it would have been vastly different had I still owned an unsuitable machine.

This brings us to the question: What is the right gramophone for chamber music? I will set forth the specification my experience has taught me—and I believe it to be the correct one. For the finest reproduction of chamber music you must possess:

A large and powerful machine with a scientifically conceived system of sound amplification, which—by the

excellence of its design and workmanship—will provide extreme clarity of tone and ample volume, in conjunction with—

A sound-box of superlative quality, of admirable definition and power, capable of extracting the most delicate nuances from the record.

A silent motor of Herculean springs and flawless gearing, which will take, at the very least, two long twelve-inch sides—so that in playing multi-disc works winding will be less irksome and the hiatus caused by the necessity of turning over a record in the middle of a movement reduced to a minimum.

The finest fibre needles obtainable. To use steels on chamber music is a desecration; to employ inferior fibres is to mar reproduction, lose a wealth of detail, and risk broken points.

Unless you have a gramophone of the type I have outlined you will not get the best out of chamber music. I have definitely proved that it cannot be done with a small gramophone; and in support of my theories I may say that in a period of twelve months I have "scrapped the lot." Starting with the disposal of my small table model and the acquisition of the Mahogany Monster, I have recommenced gramophoning with chamber music as the main plank of my record platform. I have sold nine-tenths of my pre-1924 discs and bought

chamber music with the proceeds. I have successfully endeavoured to get really satisfactory results with fibre needles. Although I am a somewhat impecunious individual, I have spent quite a lot of money; and I have never got such value for it nor enjoyed myself gramophonically so much. In no other class of music have I found such a charm of perennial freshness, so great a joy in discovering new beauties, as these wonderful records afford.

So to all who have just come under the magic spell of chamber music, I would say: Go ye and do likewise. If your present gramophone is unsuitable, sell it, hear the largest models of all the leading manufacturers, and make your choice. So long as your new machine fulfils the aforesaid requirements it does not in the least matter who makes it; but do not omit consideration (without prejudice to the rest) of the Old and New Columbia Grafonolas, the E.M.G., the Orchorsol, the Pleated H.M.V., and the large standard "Dogs" with No. 2 sound-box. All are excellent for the fine reproduction of chamber music.

Finally, do not let your joyous delvings into the H.M.V. and Magic Notes catalogues cause you to forget that long and expanding lists of masterpieces on Vocalion. The Vocalion Company are second to none in recording, their surfaces are now improved out of all recognition, and their twelve-inch discs cost but 4s. 6d. each. ! JOHN C. W. CHAPMAN.

NEEDLE-TRACK ALIGNMENT

A Bad Instance and Its Cure

By P. J. C. WHEELER

HAVING developed the gramophone mania out in India during the last few years, it was only natural that I should carry on in this country now that I am on a "Home" station. Experience out there was confined to a H.M.V. model which had the ordinary "goose-neck" tone-arm, and one endured the scratch which developed fairly soon on new records as something which was inevitable. Experiments were confined to playing with thin brass diaphragms, carbon, thick cartridge paper, and other mediums in the Exhibition sound-box.

On my arrival in this country I discovered THE GRAMOPHONE and also the small book "Gramophone Tips," both of which gave me furiously to think.

I may mention that I had already purchased a cabinet machine which had the "goose-neck" tone-arm, but is not an H.M.V.

My records were all absolutely new and there were no excuses about climate which could be made. Yet they all commenced acquiring the old scratch at an alarming rate. My subsequent study of the publications I have mentioned opened my eyes to possibilities.

I got out a drawing board and paper and laid out a plan of the machine, which very soon disclosed the source of the trouble.

The distance from the centre of swing of the tone-arm to the centre of the record table is 8 inches. From the centre of swing to the centre of the sound-box diaphragm is 6½ inches, so that with a 55 mm. sound-box and the stylus bar and needle at 50° to the record surface, the needle point comes to just about the table centre.

The goose-neck extension is to the left of the main part of the tone-arm and is so arranged that when holding the sound-box it can be swung right back so that the box lies alongside the main part of the tone-arm. It is thus out of the way when record changing.

The snag in this lies in the fact that the needle point is offset about 1 inch to the left of the axis of the tone-arm.

This arrangement of the components yields the following figures with a 12in. record.

Commencement.—29° between the tangent to the groove and the plane in which the needle and stylus bar lie.

End.—23° between tangent and needle plane.

The angle decreases by 6° throughout the record, but at best the needle must be gouging lumps out of the outside edge of the groove. Small wonder that my records were getting noisy!!

My next step was to reverse the goose-neck so that it protruded to the right of the tone-arm. This carried the sound-box over 1 inch to the right, which was a step in the right direction.

The angles in this case were 20° and 12° at the beginning and end of a 12in. record respectively. This was the best that could be done without bending the goose-neck or unsweating the sound-box socket.

I then wrote to the firm from where I bought the machine and their first reply was to the effect that this was the only complaint they had ever received.

My reply was that such a fact did not assist me in any way, and that the fault was a very real one. I sent drawings illustrating my points.

In reply they sent me a straight tone-arm to try, and stated that they were experimenting with a straight tone-arm at the moment with a view to adopting it for future manufacture on their machines.

This arm has improved matters very considerably, as the following figures will show.

The distance from the centre of swing to the centre of the sound-box socket is 6 inches. When the 55 mm. sound-box is fitted, the needle point is offset 1½ inches to the right the axis of the tone-arm.

At the commencement of a 12in. record, the plane of the needle is 4° to the left of the tangent to the needle groove, while at the end of the record the needle plane is 5° to the right of the tangent—a total change of angle of 9°. At one point during the record, however, the needle must be tracking

absolutely tangentially, this being, of course, the ideal condition.

I have also drawn out on paper the arrangement, using a tone-arm $\frac{1}{4}$ inch longer. This cuts down the total sweep to 6° instead of 9° with the 6-inch arm. This, however, is an improvement of but minor order compared with that obtained by doing away with the hopelessly bad goose-neck arm.

These results may induce some of our fellow gramophone "fiends" to carry out a little investigation on their own

account, especially now that Mr. Wilson's protractor device is available, *vide* the March issue.

I would further suggest that an official test be instituted by the Editor, using the "Wilson" device, and that results be published in the paper. Such figures would be of intense interest to intending purchasers. They might also stir a few manufacturers out of their lethargy and induce them to produce something which did not cut up valuable records in the shortest possible space of time. P. J. C. W.



CHAT

By "INDICATOR"

A VERY perturbed friend popped in the other evening. "Now look here! Why the deuce is it, when so-and-so came to my place my reproduction was rotten, absolutely rotten? Is there any explanation other than the innate cussedness of the inanimate?" It was up to me to assume a Sherlock Holmes air, lean back, and proceed with some questions. It transpired that the previous two nights to his friend's call he had not played at all; it had been very cold, also his box of fibres had been left open on a table near a window which opened to a small conservatory—rather a damp position. He generally carries a few fibres in a small brass cylindrical case in his vest pocket. I said: "Go home, light your gas fire for an hour, let your machine run for a couple of windings, put in a fibre from your vest pocket case, and let me know the result." It was good! Shows how little things make a lot of difference—sometimes.

* * *

Mention De Groot and Piccadilly Orchestra and you often get—"Tea-shop music; don't touch it, haven't now for a long time." Well, yes, a lot of it is light refreshment, piffle if you like, but have you got that old brown label *Souvenirs Tzigane* by Krish (who is at piano), reverse *Malombra Waltz* (Blanc), H.M.V. C.1018? The *Carmen Selection* (C.1075), *Manon Selection* (C.1059) also are really good.

Whilst talking of "sweetstuff," I remember a curious coincidence. When my boy first made a wireless set himself, which I in a scarcely interested fashion tried (and monopolised ever since), I heard a charming little bit—Louis Ganne's *Reverie Extase*. I noted it, and on my way up Bond Street to THE GRAMOPHONE offices to get something (I'll tell you what later) I saw in Chappell's window a little 10in. Brunswick-Clifophone with the very title, done by the Elchuco Trio, just out. Mentioning the matter to Compton Mackenzie, he agreed it was a sweet thing. "It's on Columbia," he said. So I came by it. Hear it—Col. L.1198.

Now, what I went to THE GRAMOPHONE offices for was one of those spring-back covers they supply for holding several numbers of this journal. I didn't want it for this, though. I had an idea (I get them sometimes), by cutting a step index in about thirty sheets of good tough paper, marking on the steps "Orchestra," "Tenors," "Piano," etc., slipping the whole into cover, it makes an ideal catalogue on an easy loose-leaf system. This leads me (or lands me in the necessity of going further) to the question of the best system of indexing a catalogue and keeping records. Mine is as follows: The 12in. I mark the cardboard covers A to Z, then A1 to Z1, A2 to Z2, and so on in a series of numbered alphabets; in Catalogue I enter, say, under "Tenors," heading "Caruso" G14, title of record, speed, soundbox used, and if difficult record "Long Fibre." The "Orchestral" the same way: heading "Albert Hall," K20, title of piece, and so on. For 10in. records mark cover straight on numerically 1 to the number you have reached in your progress towards bankruptcy. Where two or three records are of one piece, such as Schumann's *Quintet* on Vocalion, I put the single bags all

in one of the larger bags given when purchasing; mark this also with what is inside—G10 to J10, for instance. By the way, I'm sore, like a lot of you; I paid 32s. for that Schumann's *Quintet*, four single-sided; now it's a bargain double for 11s. the two—Voc. J.04114-04115. If you want a vigorous bit of string, that's it.

* * *

Have you all got the Schubert's *Unfinished* by now? I find it better and better the more I play it, and it was good at the start. To be frank, I thought the two previous records issued of Albert Hall Orchestra under Landon Ronald sounded as if he had had a row with the best instrumentalists, and they had left him; the *Egmont Overture* particularly was too thin, but by the *Unfinished* they have evidently made it up again and come back, for the massed string effects are it.

* * *

I know a man who recommends listening to your gramophone with your back to it. This certainly would be best if you have a warped Columbia wobbling round on the turntable. Now, about this warping; I seem to be more fortunate than many with my Columbias, as I have not yet had a really "hoppy" one; several, however, went wavy, and I had to put them in hospital, viz., on a flat sideboard, with a couple of dozen H.M.V.'s on top. By the way, I have to keep most of my records vertically, as I have so many; but I keep them upright and close together by inserting books in the gaps. I have found that, such is the intrinsic torsion working in Columbias, they warp in albums, and on top, or near the top, of piles kept in the flat. It is really better to keep some H.M.V.'s on top of them if kept this way, though, of course, it somewhat disarranges one's method of cataloguing.

* * *

I daresay most of you know that "volume" in gramophone reproduction is really a matter of "simulation." When Caruso seems about to split one's ear drums with his *fortissimo*, it would really be lost in a large hall. Similarly, such is the power of auto-suggestion when hearing "1812" (Vocalion K.05046 is a good record of this), the fact that it is by a selection from, and not the full, band of the Life Guards playing, is not for the moment realised. Another peculiar instance of this, in my own case, is with Chaliapin. He makes me feel quite uncomfortable in his Russian dramatics, by the suggestion of air suction and effluxion. I prefer his Beethoven in *In questa tomba oscura*, H.M.V. D.B.107. It is a majestic piece of singing. As I have indicated a liking for the majestic in *basso*, I may as well give you another record I am fond of: Clarence Whitehill's *Mein Vater* (*Amfortas Prayer*) in Wagner's *Parsifal*, H.M.V. D.B.439. There is power for you! Amongst the recent Wagner's the *Flying Dutchman Overture*, on Vocalion K.05136, is a band record magnificent; and the Beethoven *Quartet C sharp minor*, Vocalion K.05138-9-40-41, are four records to have and to hold.

PARLOPHONE RECORDS

Special Song Series



These novel, beautiful and most artistic discs mark a very definite advance in the art of choral recording; a matter which has presented great difficulties in the past.

The perfect balance, the nuances of expression, the musicianly phrasing and the pure tone of this excellent ladies' choir is faithfully preserved on the records. Moreover they sing to a most artistically conceived accompaniment of strings and piano. The result is entirely delightful. A special art pamphlet with text and English translation is presented with these records.

FIRST ISSUE

MENDELSSOHN AND SCHUBERT

LIEDER

Sung by the IRMLER MADRIGAL LADIES' CHOIR.

- | | | |
|---------|---|-------------|
| E 10267 | { "ICH WOLLT MEINE LIEBE" (I would that my love) | Mendelssohn |
| | { "GRÜSSE" (Greetings) | Mendelssohn |
| E 10268 | { "ABENDLIED" (Evening Song) | Mendelssohn |
| | { "AN DER WIEGE" (Lullaby) | Schubert |
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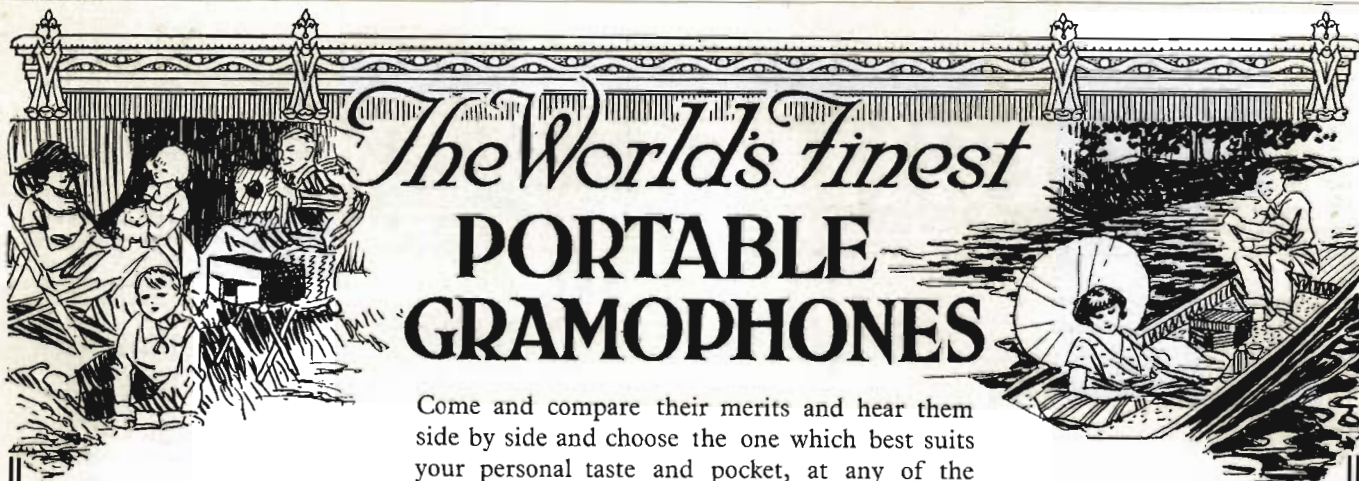
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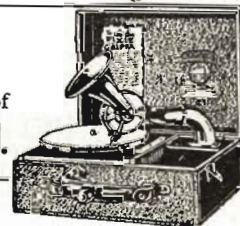


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National Gramophonic Society Notes

[All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY:—To aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the Medici have done for the reproduction of the printed book.

COST OF MEMBERSHIP:—5s. a year subscription. £3 5s. half-yearly (on March 24th and September 29th) for records, packing and (inland) postage. Twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records will be issued every year (i.e., they cost 5s. each, with 10s. a year for packing and postage. Members abroad or in the Dominions have a separate account for postage).

The Society is limited to 1,000 members.

The current year began on September 29th, 1924. New members will receive the Debussy and Beethoven quartets, the Schubert Trio and Schönberg Sextet, already issued, until the edition is exhausted (Debussy's Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, and Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, Op. 74—six records played by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet. Schubert's Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100, played by Spencer Dyke, B. Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton, and Schönberg's String Sextet, "Verklärte Nacht," played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet, with James Lockyer and E. J. Robinson, eight records; total, fourteen records).

As far as is practicable, members will be allowed to buy extra sets or extra single records at 5s. each and postage; but in no circumstances may they sell a N.G.S. record to a non-member for less than 7s. 6d.

A list of works suggested for recording by the Society is issued to members, and the Advisory Committee, which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson, is largely influenced in framing the programme for the future by the opinions on this list expressed by members. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Society does not intend to duplicate any works published or in course of preparation by any of the Recording Companies, and that the Advisory Committee uses such information as it can acquire in order to avoid this duplication.

All works are recorded complete. They should be played at the rate of 80 revolutions a minute.

The Next Records

By the time that this number is published it is hoped that the third batch of records will have been recorded, the Mozart *Oboe Quartet* and the Beethoven *First Rasoumovsky*. The former is reckoned to take two double-sided records and the latter five; so that in that event only three further records can be made to complete the two dozen for the year.

As announced on this page last month, Mr. Leon Goossens is playing the oboe part in the Mozart, and Mr. Spencer Dyke is lucky to have secured him to assist the members of the quartet.

* * *

Packing

Evidently the actual packing of the eight records of Schubert and Schönberg was efficiently carried out by the staff of THE GRAMOPHONE in the basement at Frith Street, since up to date only one broken record has been reported. But curiously enough quite a number of boxes arrived at their destination badly broken, but with the records inside miraculously intact. It looks as if the boxes themselves were too fragile for the weight of eight records.

* * *

Record Bags

The next lot of records will be sent out in stout cardboard "bags," and it is thought that these will be found very useful by members who do not keep their records in cabinets or albums. Anyhow, they are far better than the flimsy paper bags issued hitherto.

Cobbett Record

The Raff-Rubinstein record made by Mr. Cobbett's quartet is rapidly becoming a rarity. Several members have taken advantage of the chance of obtaining the few remaining copies at 5s. each post free, and after these words appear in print it will be a question of strict order of application, except that a few copies will still be reserved for overseas members.

* * *

Schubert and Schönberg

The attention of members is drawn to Mr. Gordon Bottomley's letter printed in the correspondence columns of this number. The following extracts from other letters may be of interest to other members, as they have been a source of sincere satisfaction to the committee:—

"The N.G.S. records are going to be a very wonderful library of chamber music. The surface, the perfect balance of tone, the beauty of tone and intellectuality of the players, all applied to the wise selections of the committee, and with faultless reproduction, make a whole which gives cause for thanks that I did not miss joining the Society. I had at first doubts as to the wisdom of piling up so many chamber music records when so many other good things were being produced. That feeling has quite gone. The first set were wonderful, the second, if possible, even better... I very much prefer the Spencer Dyke combination to the Lener Quartet. The tone is as ethereal, but without the over-sugariness of the Continental players. I do not think even the marvels of Flonzaley give me more perfect satisfaction."—A. H. Bassano.

"They are, I think, the most perfect, so far as absence of surface noise is concerned, I have heard. You are to be heartily congratulated on the second set of records, both for the subjects selected and for the perfection of production."—Gilbert Archer.

"The surface of the records is quite the best I know, and may I add my appreciation and thanks for the excellent packing?"—V. J. C. Knox.

"They are gorgeous. My qualms about Schönberg's sextet are completely allayed. As the note issued with the records says, it is not so cacophonous as might be expected (and as I did expect); and having played it through five times so far, I am already really enjoying it. The Schubert trio is a positive delight."—W. A. Chislett.

"May I compliment you on the choice of the works already recorded? The Schönberg sextet is a very satisfying work with which I am particularly pleased. The Schubert trio is also a work of great beauty and one which I am proud to have in my possession."—F. Nagington.

* * *

Plebiscites

Some members have expressed their anxiety lest the committee should place overmuch reliance on the voting lists. Mr. T. A. Morris, of Bristol, in particular, has constituted himself the spokesman of those who would prefer to leave matters more to the committee than to the chance of the ballot. It is perhaps wise therefore to repeat, what has been previously announced, that the committee is fully alive to the importance of striking a balance between what members *think* they would like and what they will *really* like when they get it. What is most astonishing is that hitherto the committee has contrived to produce four works which are almost universally appreciated; and until they make some unfortunate error in judging the requirements of members there is no need to reconsider the policy of the Society.

The plebiscite of the audience at the last Spencer Dyke String Quartet concert was taken, and the programme for the next concert, to-morrow afternoon, Saturday, May 2nd, was fixed by their votes. It consists of the Brahms in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1, the McEwen *Threnody Quartet*, and the Debussy in G minor. The place will be the Wigmore Hall, the time 3 p.m. Members will also like to be reminded that Mr. Spencer Dyke and Mr. Harold Craxton are giving a sonata recital at the same place and time on Saturday, May 16th, the Bax *First Sonata in E major*, the Debussy *Sonata in G minor*, and the McEwen *Sonata Fantasia* (No. 5).

Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth day of the month for inclusion in the next number. No report should exceed 350 words, unless for some special reason more space is urgently required. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

[Unfortunately we go to press too early for the inclusion of a report of the Editor's visit to the Liverpool and District Gramophone and Phonograph Society on April 22nd, but an account of his address will appear in the June number.]

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Having resolved themselves into a mock tribunal, appointed a judge, engaged counsel, and empanelled a jury, the Liverpool Society on the evening of February 9th duly proceeded, with grave solemnity nicely tempered with a flippant and fitting levity, to weigh carefully and impartially an important issue. The usher (Mr. Corlett) having called for order in Court and His Lordship (Mr. Justice Meather) having taken his seat, the Clerk (Mr. J. Riddick) announced that the case before the Court was a motion calling upon Symphonised Syncopation, alias Jazz—hereinafter called S. S.—to show cause why he, or it, being an undesirable alien, should not be forthwith deported. Counsel for the Prosecution (Mr. J. W. Harwood) stated that the main grounds upon which the application was founded were:—

That S. S. was distinctly un-English, of alien origin, chiefly of Negroid and debased extraction, and therefore unfitted to take a place in a cultured and civilised musical community. That S. S. had been guilty of the most flagrant and transparent piracy, was totally devoid of originality, and though sometimes superficially clever had no real depth of abiding merit. That the extravagant sums paid to composers, publishers and performers of S. S. were an undue drain on resources which should be devoted to other more desirable ends.

Counsel for the Defence (Mr. T. M. Riddick) contended:—That S. S., being as yet an infant, should not be too severely condemned. That there were already evident signs of improvement, and that a growing company of brilliant and worthy composers and musicians were ready to stand sponsors for the future of S. S. That on the principle of live and let live there should be a niche in our musical life for S. S. in a perfected and improved form. Owing to the obvious difficulty of calling material witnesses the evidence on either side—"taken on commission"—consisted of relevant gramophone records.

The Judge in an able and impartial summing-up addressed five questions to the Jury and these together with the answers are appended: (1) Has the case against Jazz been proved?—No. (2) Is he to be allowed to live amongst us?—Yes. (3) Will music be seriously affected by his presence?—No. (4) Shall we be better and brighter for his company if he behaves himself?—Yes. (5) Should he follow a line of his own or is he to be allowed to consort with and court and marry, if necessary, above his station?—He must remain as he is.

Though the striking originality and cleverness of much contemporary music is generally recognised it is not unusual to discover among music-lovers—especially such as find their chief delight in the compositions of a bygone day—a notion that modern works reveal a plentiful lack of melody and clarity. The impression that the modern men are for the most part unorthodox, discordant and obscure has to a large extent been fostered by critics and performers who devote their attention almost exclusively to ultra-modern works. In reality, however, there exists in the music of the more distinguished composers of to-day a wealth of pure, well-defined melody, constructed on quite clear and rational lines.

At the second March meeting the writer endeavoured in a modest and necessarily desultory way to direct attention to some music of this class and gave a brief talk on "Tunefulness in Modern Music," illustrated by a few appropriate records. In songs by Quilter, Vaughan Williams, and Elgar, in instrumental compositions of Glazounov, Palmgren and Arbos, and in such contrasted orchestral works as *Scheherazade*, by Rimsky-Korsakoff, and *Pavane pour une infante defunte*, by Ravel, were discovered melodies as dainty and appealing, as piquant and alluringly tuneful as one could desire. An interesting and fruitful discussion followed and further meetings of a similar character will assuredly be demanded.

—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

(Held over from last month.)

A well-chosen and acceptable programme was submitted on March 9th, when the arrangements were under the control of the lady members exclusively. With a four-part programme, each section chosen by a different member, one could have well excused some little clashing or inconsistency, but though contrasts were not wanting there was nevertheless a merit and homogeneity about the whole that revealed the care and taste bestowed in making the selections. Miss J. Kelly, in submitting half a dozen choice records, included two that made a special appeal, the *Canzonetta* from Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto*, by Huberman, and Weber's *Perpetuum Mobile*, by Moiseivitch. The most interesting item in Mrs. Collett's part of the programme was perhaps the "Studies in Imitation" of Herbert Hughes, as sung by De Reszke Singers, and for this record the hearer found it quite necessary to don his considering cap for a space, though it may be doubted if the conclusions arrived at reflected the designs of the composer. The "pièce de resistance" in Mrs. Fagan's list was, in the writer's opinion, *Connais-tu le pays*, by Farrer and Kreisler, whilst if in Miss Riddick's programme one item stood out more than another it was probably Gerhardt's rendering of *Morgen* by Richard Strauss. Miss Clark presided as to the manner born.

Though it may seem ungenerous to cavil, yet if a criticism may be offered anent the programme submitted by Mr. Oscar Sweeney on March 23rd, it is that he failed to include one or more orchestral items, though he is to be congratulated on the sufficiency of his courage in presenting the whole of a piano concerto, that of Saint-Saëns (No. 2). He included also a delightful record by Heifetz, a movement from the Goldmark *Concerto in A minor*, in which the soaring melody is beautifully treated by the player and a brilliant rendering by Moiseivitch of the *Nocturne for Left Hand only* (Scriabine).

The arrangements for the meeting on April 6th suffered an eleventh hour re-adjustment, but a programme of *Lieder* interspersed with Bach instrumental items was given by the Hon. Secretary and the tenderly intimate music, exquisitely played and recorded, was a source of real joy. The programme proved—if proof were needed—that music of the delicate sociable kind is as acceptable and appropriate for the Society meeting as it is for the quiet and seclusion of the home.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A successful first meeting of this Society was held on March 12th, when Mr. T. Huntley gave a lecture-recital under the title "The Growth of Opera." Our small band of enthusiastic pioneers had been eagerly looking forward to this opening night, and our expectations were more than fulfilled. Commencing with the early eighteenth century composers, the lecturer proceeded to sketch in outline the development of operatic art. Leaving Handel and Gluck behind us, we breathed Mozart's delicious fragrance, and were then shown the period of deterioration which followed, the sterile inanities of Rossini and his contemporaries; the later Italian and French schools were discussed, and at last we came to Wagner. Our guide explained briefly the theories of the Teutonic innovator, and showed how Wagner had been successful in his endeavour to fuse the arts into one homogeneous whole.

Our grateful thanks are due to Mr. Huntley for a lecture of absorbing interest throughout. It was well illustrated by the following records:—Handel, *Lascia ch'io pianga* (De Luca); Gluck, *Che farò* (Kirkby Lunn); Mozart, *Deh! vieni* (Pareto) and *When a Maiden* (Allin); Rossini, *Largo al factotum* (Ruffo), *Una voce* (Galli-Curci), and *Troncar suoi di quell'empio* (Martinelli, De Luca, and Mardones); Verdi, *O vecchio cor che batti* (Amato), *Dile alla giorine* (Galli-Curci and De Luca), and *Celeste Aida* (Martinelli); Puccini, *O soave fanciulla* (Bori and McCormack); Meyerbeer, *Pff. paf, pouf* (Journet); Halevy, *Rachel* (Caruso); Massenet, *En fermant les yeux* (Chamlee); Wagner, *Entry of the Gods into Valhalla* (Royal Albert Hall Orchestra).

The cabinet Grafonola used was kindly supplied by Messrs. Heath. The attendance was quite satisfactory. The Society was fortunate enough to secure a room in the Foresters' Hall, Charles Street, for this lecture, and is making the same place its headquarters for the future. On April 2nd the writer is due to give a recital, and on April 23rd Mr. Rink, of the Gramophone Co., Ltd., will provide a historical account of the gramophone. All music-lovers in the district desirous of joining the Society are cordially invited to get into touch with our Secretary, Mr. Evan G. Jones, 26, Enid Street, Cardiff.

As was previously announced, Sir Walford Davies has consented to become President, and the Vice-Presidents are now Mr. Percy A. Scholes, Mr. Warwick Braithwaite, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, and Mr. Walter Yeomans.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

An inaugural meeting in connection with the above was held on Wednesday, March 11th, 1925, when a much appreciated programme was submitted by Mr. Stanley Brasher. The programme included many enjoyable items, such as *Marche Militaire* (Schubert), orchestral and band versions; *Rhapsodie Hongroise* (Arthur De Greef), H.M.V.; and Purcell's *Golden Sonata for two violins*, H.M.V., and many others which were all attentively appreciated by an enthusiastic audience. The gramophone was kindly lent by Mr. J. W. Thornes, Church Street, Dewsbury.

The second meeting of the above Society was held at the Church House, Church Street, Dewsbury, on Tuesday, March 31st when the principles of the Society were outlined by Mr. S. Brasher, in the absence of the chairman, Mr. H. Pritchard. Mr. S. Brasher said that the Society aims at helping its members to gain the maximum of interest and value out of their instruments by means of a sociable exchange of programmes and talks on matters in any way connected with the gramophone. The meeting was then concluded with a short programme of records by Mr. J. W. Thornes, Church Street, Dewsbury. A comfortable room in the Church House, Dewsbury, has been secured for the time being and it is hoped that many new members may be welcomed into the ranks. The next meeting will be held in the above room on April 21st, 1925, at 7.15 p.m. All in Dewsbury and district who are interested should apply for membership and for further particulars to Mr. K. Walker, 2, Clement Terrace, Dewsbury.—K. WALKER, *Honorary Secretary*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A very enjoyable evening was provided on Monday, March 9th, by Messrs. Finnigans, Ltd., of Deansgate, Manchester, which was greatly appreciated by all present, the programme being exceptionally well selected and pleasantly varied in character. The item that was singled out as the best of the evening was *Era la notte* (Otello), by Battistini, the singer portraying the subtle and crafty insinuations of Iago much more artistically and dramatically than is shown in any version by other singers. Further outstanding records were Galli-Curci's *Pretty Mocking Bird*, a strikingly faithful reproduction of the singer's natural voice and style; Chopin's *Waltz in G flat major*, by Moisevitch, wherein the piano tone was conspicuously good. *Moment Musical* (Schubert), by Jacques Thibaud, was a beautiful violin record and two records by the Flonzaley Quartet of Mozart's *Quartet in D minor* (*Allegretto*) and Haydn's *Quartet in D major* (*Allegro moderato*) were particularly well received. At the close a very hearty vote of thanks to Messrs. Finnigans was unanimously passed for their first demonstration before the Society, and the hope was expressed that they might repeat their success at a future occasion.—CECIL J. BRENNAND, *Honorary Secretary and Treasurer*.

DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The March meeting of the Society took the form of a competition of vocal records, there being two sets of entries, for soprano and tenor records respectively. Of fourteen soprano records submitted, two tied in gaining the highest number of marks. Mozart's *Wiegenlied*, *Schlafe mein Prinzchen*, *Schlage ein* (H.M.V.), sung by Frieda Hempel, and Verdi's *A fors è lui* (H.M.V.), by Galli-Curci. At the close of the competition the members were asked to decide on the respective merits of these two, and a substantial majority voted in favour of the *Wiegenlied*, to which, therefore, the prize was awarded. The third and fourth in the list also tied, Bellini's *Come per me sereno* and Mozart's *Deh vieni non tarda*. The names of the singers were not disclosed until the results were announced, and it was interesting that whereas the former was (as most of us had probably recognised) a Galli-Curci record, *Deh vieni*, which undoubtedly deserved its high place, was sung, not by any of the

foremost celebrities, but by the comparatively unfamiliar Kathleen Destournel. Of other records submitted, one of the most noteworthy was *Panis Angelicus*, a really fine composition of César Franck's, beautifully sung by Alda; this surely deserved a higher place than was assigned to it, being about half way down the list. It was strange too that the exquisite pathos of Purcell's *When I am laid in earth*, sung with perfect sympathy by Elsie Suddaby, failed to secure it a better position than third from the end. The prize record in the tenor competition was Meyerbeer's *O Paradiso* (H.M.V.), sung by Martinelli. The two next in order were both compositions by Massenet—his *Elegy*, a characteristic Caruso record, and *O Dolce Incanto*, finely sung by Smirnoff. Dunhill's setting of the *Sea Dirge* from *The Tempest* is an impressive piece of work, but, not being particularly well sung, it was relegated (surely with some injustice, considering the character of certain records that were allowed to supersede it) to the tenth and lowest place. However, the general level of merit was high, and, on the whole, the marks assigned by the members gave evidence of careful discrimination.—H. M. HARRIS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

ACCRINGTON AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

On March 4th we had the pleasure of a lecture-demonstration by Mr. W. Hartley, of Burnley. The lecture was divided into two parts, the first dealing with music and its origin and the second with "Opera," illustrated by suitable records. At the outset Mr. Hartley explained that music was first distinguished from noise by the regularity of sound. Thus the regular tramp of soldiers' feet had the rhythm of music. The early forms of music were described, such as were used in the church. As an example of the soothing effects of music he quoted Gounod's *Ave Maria*, which he illustrated on the gramophone. To illustrate rhythm Beethoven's *Quartet in C sharp minor* was played. The third and fourth parts of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* were also given. After a short interval Mr. Hartley passed on to opera. He described the tendency towards opera which had characterised the growth of music. He gave a brief sketch of the lives of composers famed for their operatic compositions and provided suitable record illustrations which included *When a Maiden takes your fancy* (*Il Seraglio*), overture to *Magic Flute*, *Fantasia from La Traviata*, *Vengeance Song* from *Rigoletto*, *Prize Song* (*Mastersingers*), *Swan Song* (*Lohengrin*) overture to *Tannhäuser*. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded Mr. Hartley for his contribution towards a most enjoyable and interesting evening.

At our meeting on March 18th we had a return visit of Mr. Baritz, of Manchester, who gave us a delightful lecture on "Wagner." The character and life of this great composer were vividly portrayed by Mr. Baritz, who held his hearers enthralled from start to finish by the racy and sparkling style with which he dealt with his subject. The following records were played to illustrate the genius of Wagner. Overture, *Flying Dutchman*; Grand March, *Tannhäuser*; Introduction to Act 3, *Lohengrin*; Dance of the Apprentices, *The Mastersingers*. Mr. Baritz then gave us the story of *The Ring of the Nibelungs* and illustrated it with the following items; each theme in the music being pointed out and fully explained by the lecturer. *Entry of the Gods* (*Rhinegold*), *Wotan's Farewell* (*Valkyrie*), *Forging Songs* (*Siegfried*), *Siegfried's Funeral March* (*Twilight of the Gods*), *Prelude* (*Parsifal*).

The lecture was a huge success and drew a record attendance. Mr. Baritz was warmly applauded at the conclusion of his fine recital. The lecturer and lecture can be unreservedly recommended to contemporary societies who have for their aim a better appreciation of the finest music.—J. B. BARNES, *Honorary Secretary*.

NORTH WEST GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the usual entertaining and instructive meeting were heard and enthusiastically discussed the many records of *O soave fanciulla* and *Ah, Mimi tu più non torri* from *La Bohème*. The members derived much pleasure from the different renderings of these two popular duets. *The Doge's March* from the *Merchant of Venice* was also heard as recorded (or murdered) by the different companies. The official programme concluded with the finale duet, Act 1, of *Madam Butterfly*. Proceedings then degenerated into bathos as exemplified by *Tea for two*, the younger members being quite able to appreciate "that Peppering feeling" as described on April 1st (page 446).—V. W. RUSSELL FORBES.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Our meeting of April 11th was a "members' night," whereat an attractive but unprinted programme was presented by Messrs. Hillyer, Mahoney, Wilkinson, and Booth. Owing to

the absence of our hon. chairman (Mr. L. Ivory), the first-named gentleman had to assume the tri-une rôle of president, chairman, and financial secretary, with a portion of the duties of demonstrator thrown in. Messrs. Hillyer and Booth's contributions consisted of some especially fine H.M.V. records, while Mr. Wilkinson specialised in Vocalions, and Mr. Mahoney put forward a good miscellaneous selection. A Zonophone record of Browning Mummery demonstrated by Mr. Mahoney with a loud-toned steel needle was found to be so vociferous that a softer needle was substituted. If all records were as full and forward in tone as the above, the adoption of fibre needles would most likely become universal (in self-defence). Two sweetly sung songs by Miss Kathleen Destournel were among the best of Mr. Wilkinson's Vocalions, namely, *Cherry Ripe* and *Scenes that are brightest*. *Valse in A flat* (Rubinstein) was a realistic piano record from Mr. Hillyer's collection, and Mr. Booth gave an old favourite in the Coldstream Guards' rendering of *Colonel Bogey*. Melba, Gluck, Heifetz, and Kreisler were also well represented. The small but select audience, consequent upon the imminence of Easter holidays, was attentive and appreciative.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Honorary Recording Secretary*.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The meeting on March 28th fell somewhat below the usual standard and produced little of interest; a curious unanimity apparently prevailing among the three programme-givers, but this is possibly owing to the really embarrassing wealth of gramophonic material that we are blessed—or cursed—with, and which makes it increasingly difficult to cater for mixed tastes. But, at any rate, and whatever the material, there is generally something that emerges, and that does not require picking out with a pin. In this instance a very delectable thing, for which the National Gramophonic Society was responsible, emerged in the shape of the final movement from Schubert's *Pianoforte Trio in E flat*, Op. 100 (sponsored by Mr. P. Wilson). More than one member regretted that at present this work (which is recorded on nine sides) is not generally available, played as it is by Messrs. Spencer Dyke, B. Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton and admirably reproduced.

Spirituals, which recently had a vogue, under the ægis of (more particularly) Roland Hayes and Edna Thomas, still maintain their charm, and the latter's *Swing low, sweet chariot* is one of the best of these, her American accent seeming to enhance the atmosphere.

The joining forces of wireless and the gramophone which recently received some impetus by the engagement of Paderewski, was echoed by Mr. Ivory's presentation of Liszt's *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*. This work may almost be spoken of as the rhapsody.

The concert was brought to a close by the playing of part of the finale to Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 5*, where the orchestration of this composer is shown to be well adapted for the gramophone; in fact, the whole work is, up to the present, one of the best available by that means.

On April 25th a demonstration of the pleated diaphragm by the Gramophone Company will be given and the early Victorians are invited to have their theories shattered.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The members and friends of this Society were favoured with a lecture by Mr. Reginald Tansley, of Columbia Gramophone Co., Ltd., who deputised for Mr. A. R. Minns. Mr. Tansley chose for his talk "Open Air as Applied to Music," and before each record played useful and interesting data was given connecting the title and composer. Records depicting the countryside included *Morning from the Peer Gynt Suite* (Grieg), H.M. Grenadier Guards; *On Bredon Hill* (Peel), Edgar Coyle; *The Blind Ploughman*, Norman Allin; *The Pipes of Pan* (Elgar), Harold Williams; *It was a lover and his lass*, John Coates; *Blow, blow, thou winter wind*, the late Gervase Elwes; *The Accursed Hunter* (César Franck), New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; Mendelssohn's *Spring Song*, Cherniavsky Trio. Old folk-tunes next occupied the lecturer's attention, who mentioned that until recent years this national form of music had been sadly neglected, but due to the efforts of several enthusiasts we were now well represented. Folk songs of various nations were demonstrated—viz.: *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, Kedroff Quartet; *Hungarian Rhapsodie No. 2* (Liszt); *Early one morning*, Dora Labbette; English nursery rhymes by the Century Quartette. Mr. Tansley was accorded a hearty vote of thanks at the conclusion.

The Society is again indebted to the Parlophone Co., Ltd., who have generously presented fifteen records as a further contribution to the library. The gift includes the complete suite of the Rimsky-

Korsakov *Scheherazade* symphonic poem and the *Surprise Symphony No. 6*, in G major.

The next meeting will be held on April 6th next, at 7.30 p.m. Any readers interested in recorded music will be welcomed.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN.

EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The eighty-fifth monthly meeting, held at headquarters, Langthorne Restaurant, Stratford, on March 21st, proved to be a kind of mixed grill from the records and music point of view, followed by an interesting debate thereon. The first portion of the programme was given by Mr. Williams, who demonstrated ten records of the cheaper make, and, in his opinion, the equal to the most expensive type made. Included amongst them were records by Marie Novello, the Eweler Quartette, and Bettendorf. Opinion was varied as to the quality of all, but it was generally agreed that Bettendorf could easily hold her own with those sopranos of the higher cost records. The second portion of the programme consisted of records from the March lists and a demonstration of the Saxi sound-box. This sound-box, although of the large diaphragm variety, gave a brilliant tone and created quite an impression amongst the audience. Prominent amongst the March records was Chaliapine's singing of *The Last Voyage* (H.M.V. D.B.757), the aria from *Manon Lescaut*, sung by Scotney, Violet Lorand, and her Orchestra playing *Hej, Haj* (Parlophone E.10248), *The Surprise Symphony* (Parlophone E.10242-4), and last but not least Elsa Alsen singing *The call of the Valkyrie* (Parlophone E.10253). The last-named record presents to Wagnerian lovers a wonderful soprano, who, I should imagine, specialises in Wagnerian roles, and it is indeed a boon to the gramophone public to have records of this beautiful voice for such a moderate price. The last hour of the programme was taken up by the complete set of Parlophone discs portraying Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic tone-poem *Scheherazade*. It was rather tempting fate to play such a long symphony to a mixed audience, but although the hour was late no one departed, and it was listened to with rapt attention from the first to last movement, and was undoubtedly the crowning triumph of the evening. Mr. Harley's descriptive notes of this work were also greatly enjoyed. To commence a description of this orchestration would probably lead to a lengthy report which would, maybe, incur the ruthless use of the editor's blue pencil, so I will therefore desist.

Two new members were enrolled. All particulars of the Society will be sent on application to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. J. Worley, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham, E. 6.—W. J. WORLEY, *Honorary Secretary*.

WORDS WANTED BY READERS

- (1) Flower Song from "Carmen" (Bizet): "Il fior che avevi a me tu dato."
—By Dr. E. H. Wilkins, Grafton, Vesey Road, Wyldes Green, Birmingham.
- (2) Trio from "I Lombardi" (Verdi): "Qual voluttà trascorrere."
—By Philip Marchant, 62, Ritchie Street, Invercargill, New Zealand.
- (3) Bell Song from "Lakmé" (Delibes): "Dov' è l'Indiana bruna."
—By E. H. Dunham, Regent Court, Headingley, Leeds.
- (4) "The Solitary One" (R. Strauss), Norman Allin (Col. L.1568).
- (5) "The Seminarist" (Moussorgsky), Norman Allin (Col. L.1568).
—By E. H. Dunham, Regent Court, Headingley, Leeds.
- (6) "El Relicario" (Spanish).
- (7) "El Guitarrico" (Spanish).
- (8) "Torna a Surriento" (Italian).
- (9) "Maria Mari" (Italian).
- (10) "Marechiaro" (Neapolitan).
- (11) "Novembre" (French).
- (12) "Non penso a lei" (Italian).
- (13) "Cosi fai lu qui" (Faust-Berlioz).
- (14) "Adamastor, re dell'acqua"
All by Titta Ruffo on H.M.V., and—
- (15) "Querida" (Spanish).
- (16) "Munasterio" (Neapolitan). By Ruffo on Victor.
—By H. W. Legge, 24, Westwick Gardens, W. 14.
- (17) "Die Forelle" (Schubert), German words.
- (18) "Après un Rêve" (Fauré), French words.
—By E. G. Lamble, 51, Balmoral Road, N.W. 2.
- (19) "Ma confiance en toi s'est bien montrée" ("Lohengrin").
- (20) "Obéissons quand leur voix appelle" ("Manon").
—By S. W. D. Leake, 15, Dorset Road, Wimbledon, S.W. 19.

ON COMPLETION

By R. Goodchild

QUITE a feature of recent gramophone progress has been the acceptance by the recording companies of the principle that the more important works should be given in extenso. THE GRAMOPHONE has been, from the commencement, a consistent advocate of this policy and may therefore view this desirable state of affairs with particular satisfaction.

Having once put their hands to the plough record manufacturers are scarcely likely to turn back to the bad old ways but it would appear to be an advantage if the companies would make up their minds as to the exact meaning of the word "complete," which threatens to become ubiquitous in the monthly bulletins. This expression, one of peculiar significance to the more discerning gramophonist, seems capable of considerable elasticity in the minds of the recording fraternity. Consequently we have the somewhat Gilbertian spectacle of P.P. and other reviewers pointing out the cuts in "complete" issues!

In the case of the *Pathétique Symphony* for instance, the companies responsible for the three different recorded versions (H.M.V., Columbia and Parlophone) each claim their edition to be "complete," yet if we turn to P.P. (on page 298 January number) we find all these "complete" recordings weighed in the balance and found wanting in varying degrees.

In his Review of the Second Quarter of 1924 the Editor discussed rival issues of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* in the course of which it transpired that although "recorded complete":—"the Parlophone version commits an absolutely unforgivable crime by cutting the most dramatic two minutes in all music."

The same company's "complete" Mendelssohn *Violin Concerto* shows a slight cut whilst their new *Scheherazade* is very badly mutilated in spite of the assertion that it constitutes a "complete modern recording."

On perusing my *Daily Telegraph* some time ago (28th February) a Columbia advertisement caught my eye from which it appears that gramophonists have the unique opportunity of acquiring Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony* "complete in six parts on three records." At first sight one might imagine that this Company has the Pemberton Billing idea beaten to a frazzle, but an examination of the records themselves leaves one in astonishment at such a preposterous claim. The Columbia "complete" Mozart *Violin Concerto* too shows a slight cut and their *Bourgeois Gentilhomme Suite* "complete in six parts" leaves several numbers unattempted.

Again the Velvet Face announcement in THE GRAMOPHONE concludes with reference to "The complete set of the *Dream of Gerontius*," probably quite innocent in intention but nevertheless open to misconception.

It may be contended by the more fastidious that a rendering which fails to observe the prescribed repeats is not entitled to the description "complete." Most of us I fancy are willing to forgive the suppression of mere repetition, though in cases where the record boasts an ample margin of unrecorded blank space the justification seems less obvious.

Recently there has come into existence a further type of "complete" recording that goes beyond the composer's intention by reason of the discs overlapping each other. Examples of this method will be found in the following symphonies: Tchaikovsky No. 5. (H.M.V.); Mozart No. 39 (Columbia); and Beethoven No. 8 (Columbia), the last instance also containing an unauthorised repeat of the *Trio*.

H.M.V.'s warning that "the hearer should realise that such a course is being followed or he may get a rather false impression of the outlines of the work" sounds rather like a tacit admission that they have attempted to remove one disadvantage by perpetrating another.

The present slipshod use of the word "complete" is to be deplored. The safest and indeed the only logical method of dealing completely with the question is to *stick to the score*!

Order the Index to Vol. II. to be delivered
to you with the June number.

FOLLOWING THE SCORE

AT the request of many readers who use miniature scores we begin this month a series of notes on important records, which will be found useful for reference. It will be observed that they deal with complete as well as cut works.

H.M.V., D.578/582/602/596.

I. ELGAR, ENIGMA VARIATIONS, Op. 36. (Sir Edward Elgar and Symphony Orchestra.) *Score used, Miniature Edition, Novello. 7s. 6d*

FIRST RECORD. D.578.

First side.—Variations 1 and 2, page 1 to end of page 14.

Second side.—Variations 3, 4, and 5, page 15. Repeat the double bar on page 19 then on to end of page 30.

SECOND RECORD. D.582.

First side.—Variations 6, 7, and 8, page 31 to end of page 51.

Second side.—Variations 9 and 10, page 52 to page 55, bar 3. Cut bar 4 to end of page 56; re-commence page 57 to end of page 73.

THIRD RECORD. D.602.

First side.—Variations 11 and 12, page 74 to end of page 86.

Second side.—Variations 13 and part 1 of 14, page 87 to page 107, bar 5.

FOURTH RECORD. D.596.

First side.—Variations 14 (continued), commence back on page 105, last beat of bar 1 to the end of second side.

COLUMBIA, L.1621/2/3. 12in.

II. RICHARD STRAUSS, "TOD UND VERKLÄRUNG" (DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION). (Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bruno Walter.) *Score used, Eulenberg S.42. 6s.*

FIRST RECORD. L.1621.

First side.—Page 1 to end of page 16.

Second side.—Page 17 to page 48, bar 3.

SECOND RECORD. L.1622.

First side.—Page 48, bar 4, to page 77, bar 2.

Second side.—Page 77, bar 3, to page 104, bar 1.

THIRD RECORD. L.1623.

First side.—Page 104, bar 2, to the end.

Second side.—Dance of Sprites from "Faust" (Berlioz). No cuts and no repeats.

VOCALION, K.05148/9/50. 12in.

III. MENDELSSOHN, SYMPHONY No. 4 IN A (ITALIAN), Op. 90. (Aeolian Symphony Orchestra, Stanley Chapple.) *Score used, Eulenberg S.20. 3s. 6d.*

FIRST RECORD. K.05148.

First side.—Page 1 to page 24, bar 4. Cut to page 27, bar 2. Continue to end of page 38.

Second side.—Page 39 to end page 74.

SECOND RECORD. K.05149.

First side.—Page 75 to end page 83.

Second side.—Page 84, repeat first and second double bars and finish on page 102, bar 6.

THIRD RECORD. K.05150.

First side.—Page 102, bar 7, to page 132, bar 3.

Second side.—Page 132, bar 4 to the end.

No repeats except where stated.

PARLOPHONE, E.10256/7/8. 12in.

IV. BEETHOVEN, SYMPHONY No. 8 IN F MAJOR, Op. 93. (Opera House Orchestra, Dr. Weissmann.) *Score used Eulenberg S.16. 3s.*

FIRST RECORD. E.10256.

First side.—Page 1 to page 25, bar 5.

Second side.—Page 25, bar 6, to end of page 49.

SECOND RECORD. E.10257.

First side.—Page 50 to end of page 60.

Second side.—Page 61, repeat first double bar and on to page 67 and repeat double bar on this page. Continue to end of page and then *da capo* to *fine* on page 66, bar 9.

THIRD RECORD. E.10258.

First side.—Page 70 to page 100, bar 8.

Second side.—Page 100, bar 9, to the end.

No cuts. Repeats only where stated.

TRADE WINDS

The End of the Volume.

The present number completes Volume Two of THE GRAMOPHONE. The Index to it, which will be a very large affair, is in preparation (though it has been delayed unfortunately by the ill-health of our volunteer enthusiast, Mr. A. C. Rankin), and will be obtainable with the next number at an extra cost of 1s. The binding problem is more difficult. Last year we had a special binding case prepared—in black cloth with gold lettering; but it was not a great success, because it was made to hold the twelve numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE complete with advertisements—and if the advertisements were omitted the cover did not fit properly. This year we propose to leave the matter to the individual taste of our readers; with this hint only, that if they send their back numbers to Messrs. Hazell, Watson and Viney, Ltd., 52, Long Acre, London, W.C. 2, with full instructions as to binding, they will have the benefit of the copper-plate stamps which are made for our own volumes for office use.

* * *

Dancing is the chief amusement of the inhabitants of Tristan da Cunha, according to the *Daily Express*. "Music is provided by an accordion and a fiddle, which were the only musical instruments on the island until someone sent them a gramophone." The islanders, it is added, have petitioned the Colonial Office to let them have a monthly mail; no doubt they are close followers of Richard Herbert.

* * *

The following slip attached to the 1925 Victor catalogue has been sent to us by a Washington reader: "The Victor Talking Machine Company is in a position to supply records issued by the Gramophone Company of England, which are not listed in our own catalogs. A catalog will be sent direct from the Victor Company upon request." A corresponding slip in the H.M.V. catalogue would save this office a good deal of correspondence! But we are informed by a reader that "since the abolition of duties all Victor records are obtainable in this country for the modest additional sum of 6d. on 10in. and 9d. on 12in. sizes."

* * *

The lead of Columbia in adopting the Swiss electric "Motophone" a year ago or more has been followed by the Murdoch Trading Company in this country, and the great firm of Lindström A. G. (which we know better as the Parlophone Company in England and Odeon in America) has adopted it for all electric gramophones. To judge by the Motophone in the office "Balmains," this was a wise policy; but it is too early for us to give a definite report as to its lasting qualities.

* * *

Another doped fibre needle, the "Omega"—well named, but presumably not *really* the last word—is announced; and preliminary reports indicate that it will take its place with the others about which our readers send miraculous tales of endurance. The danger is that we shall get into the state of *The Spectator* when periodically the subject of the intelligence of domestic animals crops up in its correspondence column. How is one to judge the exact point at which leg-pulling begins?

* * *

Mr. Wilson's letter about the Vurtz "specialised sound-boxes" evidently put a good many readers on the right road. We have had not a single report of disappointment so far. "No specialist ever gave a patient a more thorough examination than Mr. Vurtz gave my machine," writes one reader. "In a few days he returned

with a vocal and an instrumental sound-box. These gave amazingly good results, far surpassing any of the sound-boxes I had previously used. I entirely agree with Mr. Wilson that for tonal quality, definition, sensitiveness, and volume (especially with fibres), they are unequalled. My long search for the best sound-box has come to an end."

* * *

PARADISE AND THE PERI-DULCE.

The highbrow gramomaniac has his pet aversions,
A puzzling note by Wilson drives him frantic;
Our Kittens on the Keys are far from Persians,
The New Poor Page is much too corybantic.
Alas! It seems a man may take the *Fire Bird* as a tonic,
Yet find accordion solos curiously cacophonous.

* * *

H. W. C.

Royalty always gives a good lead to us. The Prince of Wales includes a player-piano and a gramophone among his impedimenta; Prince Wilhelm, of Sweden, recites his own poems into the recording horn; and now we hear that the King of the Belgians sends a special message of good wishes to the House of Graham in connexion with its wireless department. Perhaps he will visit that wonderful salon in Savile Row the next time he flies over here and buy an Algraphone.

* * *

The note on gramophone archives in the British Museum in the last number evidently attracted some attention, as *The Observer* of the 12th contained an article on the H.M.V. records in the Museum, with the additional news that Mr. Bernard Shaw has been making records for posterity. It is good to hear that the Gramophone Company has also been recording the exquisite piano-playing of Mme. Marcelle Mayer, whose interpretations, from Scarlatti and Couperin and Rameau to Debussy, are the delight of connoisseurs.

* * *

Some of our readers have only just discovered the Xylopin needle which has often been mentioned in these pages. One of them, writing from Virginia Water says: "It is similar in shape to the ordinary H.M.V. steel needle, so that it fits into any sound-box without adaptor. I am not usually in favour of any needle but the ordinary loud steel, but where reduced volume is an advantage, I can thoroughly recommend the Xylopin. It produces a most beautiful tone on my machine (an Algrette), entirely does away with surface scratch, will play several records unchanged, and, I should imagine, reduces record wear to a minimum. What strikes me chiefly about it is that, by its use, volume is reduced without being muffled, as is generally the case with wood and fibre needles. After a hard day at the office the Xylopin is ideal; there is no harshness, no blast, no scratch to irritate jaded nerves, but a pure quiet tone calculated to enchant and soothe. I need hardly say that I am in no way connected with the manufacture or sale of this needle, nor financially interested in it." With this last assurance we need not hesitate to give these views for the benefit of other readers and the provocation of the fibreurs.

* * *

A message from Captain C. Sanford, the manager of the "Gramophone Recording Library" at Cape Town, tells us that the library has been in existence for nine months and has over twelve hundred records, a total which increases daily. Back numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE are in constant circulation among the members and "the only difficulty is that members will keep them for longer periods than lent, although they gladly pay the extra charges when the volumes are finally returned." This sounds a very live undertaking and we wish it every success.

* * *

The Federation of British Music Industries—most energetic and expanding of organisations—announced its annual convention at Llandudno from May 19th to 23rd, and the Fourth Oxford Summer Course in Music Teaching at Oxford from July 31st to August 14th, under the direction of Major J. T. Bavin. The prospectus of the latter is especially interesting and full particulars may be obtained from Major Bavin at the headquarters, 117-123, Great Portland Street. Now that Lord Birkenhead's *gaffe* at the last annual dinner of the Federation, with its repercussions in the press, has died down, we do not doubt that the Federation will confine its welcome to speakers who will not find themselves in a false position.

TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by H. F. V. LITTLE)

VERGEBLICHES STÄNDCHEN
(Vain serenade)

(Brahms.)

Gerhardt, Voc. B.3115, 10in., d.s., pink.

Guten Abend mein Schatz, guten Abend mein Kind !
Good evening, my sweetheart, good evening, my dear !

Guten Abend mein Kind !

Ich komm' aus Lieb zu dir ;
Love brings me here to you,

Ach, mach' mir auf die Tür ! Mach' mir auf die Tür,
Oh, open the door to me ! Open the door to me !

Mach' mir auf, mach' mir auf, mach' mir auf die Tür !

Mein Tür ist verschlossen, ich lass' dich nicht ein !
My door is fastened, I'll not let you in !

Ich lass' dich nicht ein !

Mutter, die rät mir klug,
Mother gives me good advice,

Wärst du herein mit Fug, wär's mit mir vorbei,
If you were allowed in here I should indeed be lost,

Wär's mit mir, wär's mit mir, wär's mit mir vorbei !

So kalt ist die Nacht, so eisig der Wind,
So cold is the night and so icy the wind,

So eisig der Wind,

Dass mir das Herz erfriert,
That my heart is freezing,

Mein Lieb' erlöschen wird. Öffne mir, mein Kind,
And my love will die. Open to me, my dear,

Öffne mir, öffne mir, öffne mir mein Kind !

Löschet dein Lieb', lass sie löschen nur !
If your love is dying, well then, let it die !

Lass sie löschen nur !

Löschet sie, immer zu,
If it's dying, go along,

Geh' heim zu Bett, zur Ruh' ! Gute Nacht, mein Knab',
Go home to bed and rest ! Good night, young man !

Gute Nacht, gute Nacht, gute Nacht mein Knab' !

BOMBOMBOM

(Das Goldene Kreuz—Ignaz Brüll.)

M. Bohnen, Brunswick, A.50037, 12in., d.s., gold.

Bombombom, trarara,

In Reih' und Glied gestanden,
In rank and file assembled,

Bombombom . . . gestanden,

Gewehr im Arm, Kopf in die Höh',
Shouldering arms, heads in the air,

So marschiert die grosse Armee
Thus the mighty army marches

Lustig in Feindes Landen,
Gaily in the enemy's country.

So marschiert . . . Landen.

In ihren Reihen ist kein Poltron,
In its ranks is no poltroon,

Kein Hasenfuss, kein Scheuer,
No chicken-heart, no shirker,

Sie kennt nicht Rückzug, nicht Pardon,
Retreat or quarter it does not know,

Steht lust'gen Muts im Feuer.
And in gay spirits stands under fire.

Bombombom . . . Landen.

Und kehrt man heim mit Sieg gekrönt,
Then home we come with victory crowned,

Von Pulver schwarz und schartig,
With powder black and streaky,

Wo uns die Liebste heiss ersehnt,
To where our sweethearts longed for us

Und treu geharrt und artig ;
And good and true have waited ;

Da wirft man von sich das Gewehr,
Then we throw our weapons aside,

Und zieht das Mädel zu sich her.
And draw the girls closely to us.

Bombombom . . . gestanden,

Mädel im Arm, Kopf in die Höh',
Girls in their arms, happy and proud,

So ergibt sich die grosse Armee,
So the mighty army yields,

Allein zu ew'gen Banden !
To life-long fetters only !

So ergibt . . . &c.

WIE ANDERS WAR ES
(How times have changed !)

(Das Goldene Kreuz—Ignaz Brüll.)

M. Bohnen, Brunswick, A.50037, 12in., d.s., gold.

Wie anders war es, als vor wenig Jahren
How different it was when, a few years ago,

Die stolze Truppe auszog aus Paris,
The proud army marched out of Paris ;

Mit Blumenkränzen grüsste man die Scharen,
With floral garlands the troops were greeted,

Mit Jubel, der den sichern Sieg verhies.
With jubilation that promised sure victory.

Das Glück des Kriegs hat gegen uns entschieden,
The fortune of war has decided against us,

Doch die Armee hat ihre Pflicht getan,
Though the army has done its duty ;

Die Hälfte fiel—der Rest sind Invaliden.
Half are fallen—the remainder are invalids.

Je nun, man trägt, was man nicht ändern kann.
Ah, well ! what can't be helped must be endured.

Ich schlug mich brav, das darf ich selber sagen,
Bravely I fought, I can say that for myself,

Ich stand beim Adler in den ersten Reihn,
I stood by the flag in the foremost line ;

Der Adler ward von einem Blitz erschlagen,
The flag was struck down by lightning,

Und eine Kugel traf mir, ach ! das Bein.
And a bullet, alas, hit me in the leg ;

Es hielt nicht aus ; verwundet viele Male,
It wouldn't hold out ; wounded many times,

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Zersplittert sank 's; ich sah es traurig an,
It collapsed, blown to bits; sadly I gazed upon it,
 Und trug es selber fort zum Hospitale.
And took it off myself to the hospital.
 Je nun, man trägt, was man nicht ändern kann.

Ich war ein schöner Kerl trotz meiner Jahre,
I was a handsome chap, despite my age,
 Die Weiber hatten's auf mich abgesehn;
The women had made a mark of me;
 Der stramme Gang, die ungebleichten Haare!
My splendid gait, no grey hairs in my head!
 Ich nahm im Sturm, nichts konnte widerstehn!
I took them all by storm, none could resist!
 Auch jetzt hat sich mein Herz noch nicht beschieden,
And yet my heart remains still undecided,
 Allein die Weiber wollen einen Mann,
Only the women want a man,
 Mitleidig schaun sie auf den Invaliden.
And look upon an invalid with pity.
 Je nun, man trägt, was man nicht ändern kann.

TOMBA DEGLI AVI—FRA POCO A ME RICOVERO

(Lucia di Lammermoor—Donizetti.)

Hislop, H.M.V., D.B.695, 12in., d.s., red. (Recit. and Aria.)
 McCormack, H.M.V., D.B.345, 12in., d.s., red. (Aria only.)

Tomba degli avi miei, l'ultimo avanzo d'una stirpe infelice,
Tomb of my ancestors, receive, alas, the last scion of an unhappy
 deh! raccogliete voi. Cessò dell'ira il breve foco; sul
clan. The brief fire of my anger is over; to my enemy's sword
 nemico acciaro abbandonarmi vo'. Per me la vita è orrendo
I will abandon my life. Life to me is a hateful thought;
 peso; l'universo intero è un deserto per me senza Lucia.
without Lucy, the whole wide world seems a wilderness. With
 Di faci tutta via splende il castello. Ah! scarsa fu la
torches everywhere the castle is illuminated. Ah! The night
 notte al tripudio. Ingrata donna! Mentr'io mi struggo in
was not sufficient for the rejoicings. Ungrateful woman!
 disperato pianto, tu ridi, esulti, accanto al felice consorte.
While in despairing tears I am pining, you are laughing and
 Tu delle gioie in seno, tu delle gioie in seno, io della
rejoicing beside your happy husband. You in the arms of joy,
 morte! della morte!
you in the arms of joy, and I in those of death, of death!

Fra poco a me ricovero darà negletto avello.
Very soon a neglected tomb will give me shelter.

Una pietosa lagrima non scenderà su quello; ah!
No tear of pity will fall upon it; alas!

Fin degli estinti, ah! misero, manca il conforto a me.
Unhappy me! Even that consolation of the dead will be lacking.

Tu pur, tu pur, dimentica quel marmo dispreggiato.
Even you, even you, forget this despised tomb.

Mai non passarvi, o barbara, del tuo consorte a lato; ah!
Never pass it, cruel one, with your husband by your side; ah!

Rispetta almen le ceneri di chi moria per te,
At least respect the ashes of one who dies for you,

Rispetta almen le ceneri di chi moria per te.

Mai non passarvi; tu lo dimentica;
Never pass it by; forget it;

Rispetta almeno chi muore per te.
At least respect one who dies for you,

Mai non passarvi, tu lo dimentica,

Rispetta almeno chi muore, chi muore per te.

O barbara, io moro per te.
Oh! cruel one, for you I die.

TU CHE A DIO SPIEGASTI L'ALI

(Lucia di Lammermoor—Donizetti.)

McCormack, H.M.V., D.B.345, 12in., d.s., red (without chorus).

Martinelli, H.M.V., D.B.332, 12in., d.s., red.

Constantino, Col. A.692, 10in., d.s., l.blue (without chorus).

Edgar: Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali, o bell' alma innamorata,
Thou who has spread thy wings to Heaven, beautiful,
beloved soul,

Ti rivolgi a me placata, teco ascenda, teco ascenda il
 tuo fedel.

Look down, appeased, upon me, thy faithful lover is
coming to thee.

Ah! se l'ira dei mortali fece a noi sì cruda guerra,
Ah! Though mortal hatred waged such a cruel war
against us,

Se divisi fummo in terra, ne congiunga il Nume in ciel.
Though on earth we were parted, God will unite us in
Heaven.

Oh! bell' alma innamorata, bell' alma innamorata,
Oh! beautiful beloved soul, beautiful beloved soul,

Ne congiunga il Nume in ciel,
God will unite us in Heaven,

Oh! bell' alma . . . to . . . in ciel.

*Io ti seguo.
I follow thee. (Stabs himself.)

Raymond: Forsennato, forsennato!
Madman, madman!

Chorus: Ah! che fai, ah. che fai?
Oh! what are you doing?

Edgar: *Morir voglio, morir voglio.
I want to die, I want to die.

Chorus: Ritorna in te, ritorna in te, ritorna in te!
Compose yourself, calm yourself, calm yourself!

Edgar: *No! No! No!

Raymond: Che facesti?
What have you done?

Edgar: A te vengo, o bell' alma!
I am coming to thee, beloved soul!

Raymond: Sciagurato!
Unhappy man!

Edgar: Ti rivolgi, ah! al tuo fedel.
Look down upon your faithful lover.

Raymond: Pensa al ciel!
Think of Heaven!

Edgar: Ah! se l'ira dei mortali . . . si cruda guerra,

Raymond: Oh Dio, perdona!
Oh, heaven, forgive him!

Chorus: Quale orror! quale orror!
What horror! how dreadful!

Edgar: Oh bell' alma ne congiunga il Nume in ciel,

Raymond: Pensa al ciel.

Edgar: Bell' alma innamorata, bell' alma innamorata,
 Ne congiunga il Nume in ciel,
 Bell' alma . . . to . . . in ciel,

*Il Nume in ciel, il Nume in ciel, il Nume in ciel.

Chorus: Oh! tremendo, oh! nero fato!
Oh! dismal, terrible fate!

Dio, perdona tanto orror!
May God pardon so great a crime

Perdon, perdon, perdona tanto orror! (Edgar dies.)

*Omitted when the air is given solo.

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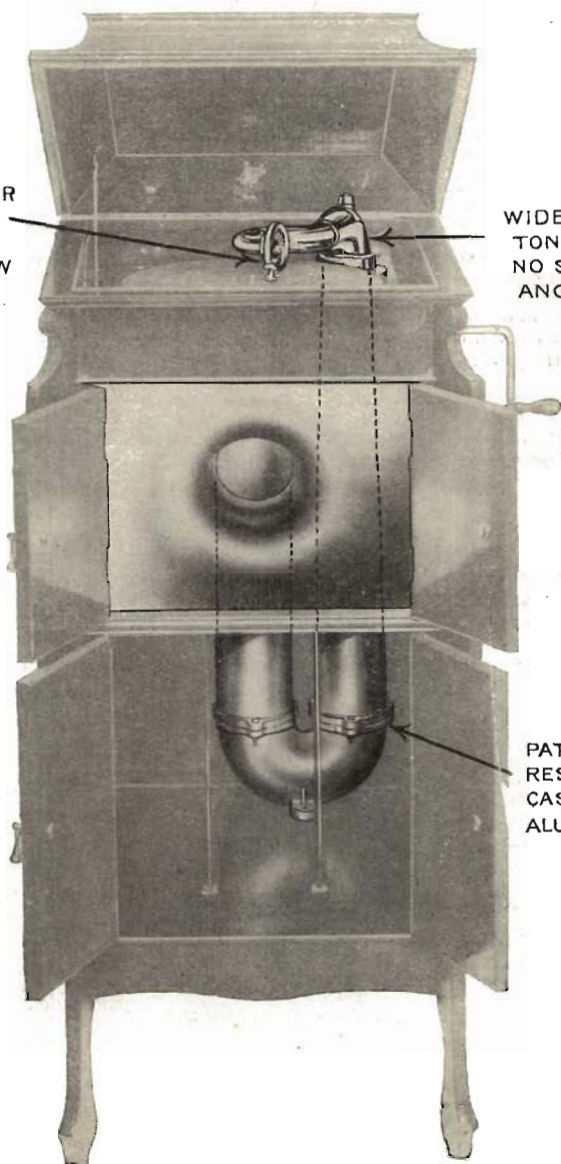
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Analytical Notes and First Reviews

HAYDN'S HORNPIPE QUARTET

VOCALION.—X.9554, 9555, 9556 (10in., 9s.).—Spencer Dyke
String Quartet: Quartet in D major, Op. 64, No. 5 (Haydn).

Many companies have recorded this quartet in a more or less mutilated state, but this is the first complete version we have, and it is interesting to note that the Spencer Dyke Quartet have been able to include the whole of it on three double-sided 10in. records. It seems curious that no one has thought of doing this before.

The work is a very happy example of Haydn's most genial manner. No doubt it is the last movement that has won it the name of the "Hornpipe" quartet, but the spirit of contentment pervades the whole thing and makes it one of the most refreshing pieces imaginable to listen to.

First Movement.—A dainty succession of *staccato* notes opens the proceedings. Above these the first violin presently plays a typically Haydnesque *legato* melody. The key changes in due course, but there is no regular second subject, though our attention is arrested by a couple of descending scales in triplets. Very soon after these we come to the development section in which use is made of most of the foregoing material. The first record ends just as we arrive at the recapitulation, which is a perfectly regular, but slightly extended version of the exposition.

Second Movement.—The slow movement consists simply of the announcement of a long, peaceful air in the major key, some comments upon it in the minor, and its restatement in the major again with some graceful embroidery. The first violin has most of the fun, but the interest never flags. The break between the sides comes in the middle of the section in the minor key.

Third Movement.—This is a *minuet* and *trio* of the familiar type. The *minuet* is gay and sprightly, the *trio* (which is once more in the minor) a cheerful conversation between the four instruments. The *minuet* is repeated, as usual, at the end.

Fourth Movement.—The *finale* is a splendid example of impressible high spirits and a veritable *tour de force* for the players, especially the first violin, who has an exceedingly busy time of it. The flow of semi-quavers is almost ceaseless from beginning to end, and the vitality of the rhythm combined with the shortness of the movement make analysis unnecessary. For those, however, who love such things it may be said that the piece consists of (1) a tune in the major key on the first violin; (2) a continuation of this in a new key, (3) a repetition of the original theme, (4) a longish section in the minor, containing some contrapuntal treatment of the material, (5) a repetition of the first three sections, and (6) a brilliant and effervescent *coda*.

The performance is first-rate throughout, light and clear, as Haydn's music should be. The recording, too, is good and allows the details of the music to come out clearly. Occasionally the low notes of the 'cello become rather a matter of faith and there is one place—the end of the first side—when the join between the sides leave something to be desired. Might we not have had one chord more on side one? But these are trifles compared with the solid virtue of the series of records on which I congratulate the Vocalion Company.

P.P.

THE EMPEROR QUARTET

COLUMBIA.—L.1633, 1634, 1635 (12in., in album, 22s. 6d.).—
London String Quartet: Quartet in C major (Haydn).

Haydn wrote the Austrian National Anthem, *God Preserve the Emperor*, in 1797, at the suggestion of the Imperial High Chancellor and Minister of the Interior; and though there is no longer an emperor for God to preserve the tune remains the best thing of its kind in existence. Haydn loved it so much that, during the last years of his life, he used constantly to be led to the piano to play it. It is related that only five days before his death, "he played it over three times in succession, with a degree of expression that astonished himself." The *Emperor Quartet*, then, is so-called

because the slow movement consists of variations upon this air. It has been said that Haydn found the string quartet the best method of expression for his genial muse. He works within its small limits with perfect freedom; with results indeed that must have astonished his contemporaries as well as inspiring them to try and do likewise; as Mozart did. Analysis of Haydn always seems a work of supererogation. He throws open the windows of his mind and we see there thoughts clear as crystal arranged in beautiful sequence. A few words only, then, on the movements.

First Movement. *Allegro.*—A movement of rich and varied interest. The counter-theme to the first tune (bar 5 of score) should be noted as much use is made of it. The tum-tum accompaniment to the second tune is by no means there for lack of resource; it has a definite place in the scheme. The double bar brings a repeat and the first side completes the exposition. The chief point, of many, of interest in the working out is the treatment of the counter-theme. It is as if Haydn said to himself suddenly: "I'm so happy I must have a dance." Viola and 'cello make a drone bass and the violins play the tune with exhilarating effect.

Second Movement. *Air and Variations.*—Haydn loved his tune too well to wander far from it; so after it is given out in four-part harmony we get four exquisitely simple variations; each instrument in turn being allotted the tune. Only first and second violins are employed for Variation 1, the latter having the tune, the former flowing passage work. The 'cello is given the melody in Variation 2 with a delicate counter-theme for the first violin; the second violin and viola fill in with appropriate harmonies. Next comes the turn of the viola with the three others in parts of independent interest; there are some lovely chromatic passages. Finally the first violin again resumes command against a background of rich harmonies and Haydn bids farewell to his beloved air in a brief *coda*.

Third Movement. *Menuett, Allegro.*—Interest centres in a very original trio; in the middle of which comes a long pause followed by a break into the major key, then back to the minor. All the repeats are made.

Fourth Movement. *Presto.*—Which might be early Beethoven. It is vigorous and massive except for the tender second theme, by way of contrast. Much use is made of a triplet figure to which all the strings contribute. The return to the first tune is most beautifully done. Judging by the very high standard set by such quartets as the Lener, Flonzaley, and Spencer Dyke, I find this re-appearance of the London Quartet on the Columbia list rather disappointing. The first movement is roughly played. The balance at the start is poor, the second violin's tone weak. The latter's intonation at the opening of Part 2 is distinctly uncertain. The phrasing of the first violin in the playing of the air in the second movement is not clean enough, but the variations are beautifully played, the dying-away *coda* lovely. This makes the pinched tone of the upper strings in the *Minuet* the more noticeable. It is really only in the final movement that the quartet attains to a high point of achievement. Perhaps it so happened that they were "off colour" when the recording was done. One cannot always be in the mood, especially for Haydn, in this uncertain climate. In some of the points criticised the recording may be to blame. Recording is still largely a matter of luck. For instance, the rapid 'cello passages in the last movement are perfectly clear, though one would expect otherwise; yet in the first movement the second violin, which should offer no difficulty, is almost inaudible sometimes.

N. P.

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.987 to 992 (six 12in. records in album, 39s.).—Orchestre Symphonique des Concerts Pasdeloup, conducted by Rhené-Baton: *Symphonie Fantastique* (Berlioz).

(See pp. 467-469).

BELTONA

May, 1925.

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MISS ETHEL KEMISH, whose delightful record last month has been followed by another this month No. 746, is the latest Beltona Artist. Amongst others peculiar to Beltona we would mention Miss Minnie Mearns, Miss Violet Davidson, Carma Daah, Appleton Moore, Hughes Macklin, Elliot Dobie, Robert Murray, Gordon Inglis, Gerard Crofts, Dufton Scott, Chas. W. Crofts, Elocutionist; J. Hunter Macmillan, Pianist; Florence Macbride, Violinist; Pipe Major Jas. Robertson, The Glasgow Orpheus Choir, The Sutherland Orchestra, etc., etc.

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745	I'll See You in My Dreams. (Kahn-Jones.) When My Sugar Walks down the Street. (McHugh-Mills.) Duets, sung by Wilson and Austin, with Guitar Accompaniment.		753	Berceuse. (Jarnesfelt.) Sirventese. (Pick-Mangiaga li.) Played by Francis Burrows. Violin Solos with Piano Accompaniment.	
746	Your Eyes have told me. (O'Hara.) I know a Lovely Garden. (Guy d'Hardelot.) Sung by Ethel Kemish Soprano, with Piano Accompaniment.		754	Highland Schottische. Rattling Boys of Paddy's Land. (Circassian Circle.) Played by the Erin Players.	
747	Lourdes Hymn. To Jesus, Heart all Burning. (Father Maher.) Sung by the Beltona Male Quartette.		755	At the End of the Road. (Foxtrot.) (Hanley.) One Million Times a Day. (Foxtrot.) (Jerome.) Played by the Avenue Dance Orchestra.	
748	Turkish Patrol. (Michaelis.) King Cotton March. (Sousa.) Played by the Beltona Military Band.		756	Oh! Mabel. (Foxtrot.) (Florito.) Tell her in the Springtime. (Foxtrot.) (Berlin.) Played by the Sunny South Dance Orchestra.	
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			758	Artist's Life. (Waltz.) (Strauss.) Roses from the South. (Waltz.) (Strauss.) Played by the Sutherland Dance Orchestra	
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THE ENIGMA VARIATIONS.

COLUMBIA.—L.1629-1632 (four 12in. records in album, 30s.).—*New Queen's Hall Orchestra*, conducted by Sir Henry J. Wood: *Enigma Variations* (Sir Edward Elgar).

Mr. Percy Scholes's full analysis of Elgar's *Enigma Variations* in the December (1924) number of *THE GRAMOPHONE* make further comment unnecessary here. In addition the Columbia Company have hit upon the happy idea, new to me, of putting a well written analysis of the music upon the covers of the record envelopes, so that as you take out the record you can read about what you are to hear. Another good point, the title of the work now appears upon the outside of the record book. My one criticism upon this excellent get-up is that the numbers of the variations played on each side should have been given upon the record labels. "Part 7" conveys nothing if the record happens to have strayed from its case and, in this respect, we are, unfortunately, not all immaculate. The recording, as such, is naturally an advance upon the H.M.V. issue of some two years ago. There is greater sonority and clarity of detail with, in most of the variations, better balance.

Of the H.M.V. set Mr. Scholes wrote that there was a "lack of delicacy in many places and a lack of subtlety almost everywhere." While the latter is rarely found in orchestral records it must be admitted that Sir Henry Wood's interpretation is extremely matter-of-fact. It is not his work. The vigorous variations with plenty of brass come off best and are extraordinarily brilliant. The recording has evidently been done with the greatest care, which is certainly a matter for thankfulness.

Theme. Variations 1, 2, and 3.—A weak start. The definition of the theme needs both strength and tenderness. The first variation is distinctly muddy, but this is much more the "fault" of the lay-out than of the recording apparatus. It calls for a delicacy, a perfection of balance, the gramophone cannot yet achieve. No. 2 is neatly played, but the intonation in the final bars is a little doubtful. The repeat is omitted in No. 3. This variation is rather muddy in the middle, but otherwise successful.

Variations 4, 5, 6, and 7.—No. 4 is very good in every respect, brass particularly so. The string tone is excellently massive in No. 5, and the chattering wood-wind passages are good. The most marked improvement on the older H.M.V. version occurs in No. 6 in regard to the viola solo, but the end is weak, as before. Timpani are fairly good in No. 7, but do not achieve a *ff*. Trombones, string rushes, and wood-wind chromatic swirls come out with great brilliance. The "attack" is splendid.

Variations 8 and 9.—The clarinets' tone in No. 8 is coarse and the oboes also lack delicacy; they play almost *forte* instead of *piano*. The strings, however, are very good. Sir Henry seems entirely to miss the point of the music in this variation. The noble *Nimrod* (No. 9) is a great advance on the H.M.V. one. The previously "cut" bars are restored and there is an admirably managed crescendo from the opening bars to the climax. The brass are fine.

Variation 10.—This is not *Dorabella*, but some bobbed and shingled Miss. The H.M.V. version—which, may I remind you, is conducted by the composer—is preferable. The playing should be as light as gossamer; not, as here, heavy as bed tick.

Variations 11 and 12.—One may hazard that Sir Henry reached No. 11 with a sense of relief. He plunges boldly, with first rate "attack," into its chromaticisms. The brass flash out very vividly. The beautiful No. 12 shows little advance on the old recording. Indeed, the 'cellos sound more like horns than they did in the H.M.V. version. Both are good in spite of this.

Variations 13.—The last three sides have short measure, but I expect this was inevitable if no cuts were to be made. No. 13 is good, taking into account its peculiar difficulties.

Variation 14.—The Finale, as before, just fails. You feel the recording apparatus tries its level best to cope with the big treble-forte chords imposed on it and becomes a bit hysterical in consequence.

One or two of the surfaces were crackly, but this is often the case on review samples. There is so much that is of the greatest interest interpretively and technically, from the recording point of view, in this issue that one hopes many people will buy it even if they already possess—as all good Britons should—the H.M.V. version of two years ago. N. P.

COLUMBIA

(May Issues.)

- D.1512 (10in., 5s.).—Dora Labbette (soprano): *The Flowers of the Forest and Ye Banks and Braes*.
 3564 (10in., 3s.).—Arthur Jordan (tenor): *Songs of the Hebrides—The Island Herdmaid* (Kennedy Fraser), *So Sweet is Shee* (arr. Dobnetch), and *Song of the Palanquin Bearers* (arr. Martin Shaw).
 3609 (10in., 3s.).—William Heseltine (tenor): *Like Stars above and Lorraine*.
 D.1513 (10in., 5s.).—Norman Allin (bass): *Song of the Harp-Player* (Moussourgsky), and *The Ballad of Semmerwater*.
 D.1510 (10in., 5s.).—Pouishnoff (piano): *Arabesque in G* (Debussy) and *Polka* (Glazounov).
 D.1511 (10in., 5s.).—Leo Strockoff (violin): *Chanson Hindoue* (Rimsky-Korsakoff) and *Guitarre* (Moskowski).
 3614 (10in., 3s.).—Jean Lensen and his Orchestra: *Serenade from Les Millions d'Arliquin* and *Si mes vres avaient des ailes*.

Dora Labbette wastes herself on two badly-planned arrangements of folk tunes. They are dreariness personified. Yet in its proper setting the *Flowers of the Forest* is most moving and *Ye Banks and Braes* a charming song. If folk songs are to be sung, the words must be clearly heard, the expression unforced. Unfortunately, neither of these conditions are observed by the artist. Arthur Jordan has selected three delightful songs which he sings sympathetically and well. *So sweet is shee* is usually known as *Have you seen a whyte lillie grow*—Ben Jonson's lovely words; Alma Gluck has made a charming record of the song (H.M.V.). Martin Shaw's setting of Sarojini Naidu's *Palanquin Bearers* is an example of a perfect wedding of words and music, and the Gaelic song has the charm of all Mrs. Kennedy Fraser's treasures. The recording has given a rather sharp edge to Mr. Jordan's voice in the first two songs. The same thing is noticeable in William Heseltine's record of two ballads which does not call for further comment. A fine old ballad—what a difference the adjective makes!—and one of Moussourgsky's striking songs make up Norman Allin's contribution. His tone and diction are excellent. This is a record to buy and study.

Pouishnoff and Strockoff are content with familiar, oft-recorded music which the one plays in a distinguished way, the other in just an ordinary manner, which betrays him at times. Thus the intonation in the *Chanson Hindoue* is poor and the harmonies screechy in *Guitarre*. A string quartet accompaniment seems unnecessary. Pouishnoff records well; the delicacy of the *Arabesque* is very attractive.

"Hats off! Gentlemen, another de Groot!" I liked the *Millions d'Arliquin* enormously and the Hahn song no less. The latter is more effective instrumentally than vocally unless the vocalist be a very great artist. The violin seems to give just the right caressing tone to the melody, and the flight into higher altitudes (unauthorised by the composer!) is undeniably effective. N. P.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(May Issues.)

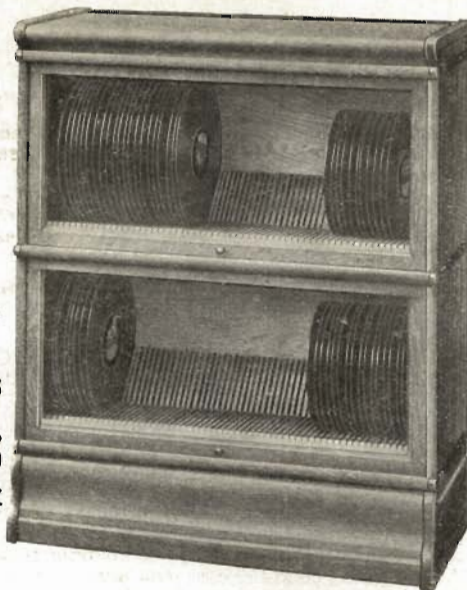
- D.B.833 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Paderewski (piano): *Impromptu in B flat major* (Schubert).
 D.B.764 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Suggia ('cello): *Suite for 'Cello in C major, Prelude and Allemande* (Bach).
 D.B.821 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Toti dal Monte (soprano): *Carneval di Venezia (Aria e variazione)* (Jules Benedict).
 D.A.680 (10in., 6s.).—John McCormack (tenor), with violin obbligato by Fritz Kreisler: *To the children, Op. 26, No. 7*, and *How fair this spot, Op. 21, No. 7* (Rachmaninoff).
 D.B.801 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Thibaud (violin): *Sonata in E minor, Gigue, Menuett, and Gavotte* (F. M. Veracini, arr. J. Salmon).
 D.A.566 (10in., 6s.).—Ezio Pinza (bass): *Ah! del Tebro al giogo indegno from Norma* (Bellini), and with L'Alessio (tenor), *Non sai tu che d'un giusto from La Favorita* (Donizetti).
 E.380 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Eric Marshall (baritone): *Die Lotusblume* and *Du bist wie eine Blume* (Schumann).

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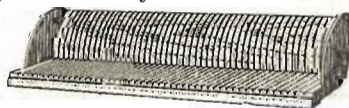


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- E.379 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Robert Radford (bass): *Four jolly sailormen* (Edward German) and *When that I was a tiny boy, Falstaff's Drinking Song* from *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Nicolai).
 E.381 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Elsie Suddaby (soprano): *Lass with the delicate air* (Arne) and *Spring* (Henschel).
 C.1194 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra: *The Lost Chord* (Sullivan, arr. W. Henley) and *Abide with me* (Liddle).
 B.1988 (10in., 3s.).—Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): *A Spirit Flower* (Tipton) and *A summer love tale* (Tchaikovsky).
 B.1989 (10in., 3s.).—Walter Glynn (tenor): *The Love Lily* (Thompson) and *So gently speaks my lady fair* (Cleaver).
 B.1992 (10in., 3s.).—Jesse Crawford (pipe organ): *Old Pal* and *Dreamer of Dreams*.

The first six (celebrity) records came too late to hand for anything but a brief notice of the first to be picked up, which is the Paderewski. Everyone who loves the art of one of the greatest of pianists need have no hesitation over buying this record. The difficulties of making a good Paderewski disc seem at length to have been overcome; indeed the one under review could hardly be bettered. And if the piano tone be good, what of the interpretation? I can only say go and hear it and if you are not enraptured you merit Shakespeare's condemnation. The *Impromptu* is an air—very akin to the well-known *Rosamunde* one—with five variations and a *coda*. The exquisite poise of the last variation, the tenderness of the *coda* refreshed my record-weary brain like nectar.

Eric Marshall is known to me only as an Albert Hall "celebrity" artist with a fine voice and an effective method. His appearance on H.M.V. records as a *lieder*-singer is distinctly interesting. The fine voice records beautifully, but there is too much of the "effective method" at present for him to be a good *lieder*-singer, and his German is not that of Gerhardt. Eric Marshall misses entirely the lovely word-colour of the language and that is to miss half the beauty of the songs. Heine's *Du bist wie eine Blume* (Thou art like a lovely flower) is reputed to have been addressed to a white pig, but I do not think the singer, in this case, had that idea in his mind, so sentimental are his *portandos*! When Mr. Marshall realises *lieder* and ballads are two different things his records will be well worth possessing. This one, by the way, is very short measure. Robert Radford dishes up an old favourite—the parent of how many of its type—with great vivacity. Nicolai's setting of *When that I was a tiny boy* is profoundly un-Shakespearean, but nevertheless an excellent song. Radford's fat laugh is, at any rate, of the authentic Falstaff brand. The accompaniments are well recorded and the singer is in fine voice.

Elsie Suddaby's art is displayed to perfection in her latest record. Henschel's *Spring*, with its imitation bird warblings, might become, in the hands of an indifferent singer, a mere vocal exercise; but Miss Suddaby raises it to the level of a delicate pastel. I have seldom enjoyed a song record as much as this. Arne's song also is beautifully done. No singer can now complain that it is impossible to record *piano* or *pianissimo* tone, for even the softest notes are here caught by the recording apparatus. De Groot's record is an orgy of religiosity. Almost one cries out "I'm saved." The dramatic pause before the high note in the *Lost Chord* is masterly! The recording is worthy of better things; however, as the disc is certain of a wide welcome, an excellent performance, well produced, is the next best possible thing.

There is not much to be said about Peter Dawson's record of a dullish Tchaikovsky song and a very commonplace ballad. His voice sounds as well as ever. There are a great many fine English songs waiting to be recorded, as well as *lieder* in Stuart Wilson's and Fox Strangways' excellent translations. Surely these would be acceptable to the public. The truth about Walter Glynn's voice has flashed upon me; it has a *Marcelle* wave in it. Listen to the *Love Lily* and see if you do not agree with me.

Jesse Crawford is again "seated one day at the organ," with results similar to last month
 N. P.

PARLOPHONE

(May Issues)

- E.10270, 10271, and 10272 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra: *Death and Transfiguration* (Strauss) (G. and T.).
 E.10273 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Opera House Orchestra: *Der Lustige Krieg Overture* (J. Strauss) and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Seraglio) Overture (Mozart).
 E.10274 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Orchestra: *Scènes Pittoresques*—No. 1, *Marche*; No. 2, *Air de Ballet*; No. 3, *Fête Bohème* (Massenet).
 E.10275 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Orchestra: *Extase* (Ganne) and *Narcissus* (Nevin).
 E.10278 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Zinaida Jurjevskaja (soprano): *O du die mir einst Hülfe gab* from *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Gluck) and *Ach' ich fühl's es ist verschwunden* from *The Magic Flute* (Mozart).
 E.10279 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Melany Kurt (soprano): *Isolde's Liebestod* from *Tristan* (Wagner); *Emmy Bettendorf, Grete Mancke, Peter Jonsson, Gustav Werner, and Werner Engel: Quintet* from *The Mastersingers* (Wagner).

Two *Tods* in successive months—material here for an excellent fit of the dismal! The work was annotated in the April issue (p. 436), so all I need say is that this is a very competent performance. Comparing some samples of the Columbia records side by side with these, I have noted that, speaking generally, the Parlophones give us rather bigger, more prominent tone, not quite so suavely blended. The individual instruments seem to stand forth even more clearly than in the Columbia records, but the latter, to my ear, have rather more sweetness. Those Columbias sound (on hearing them several times since I wrote the note upon them) better than ever. The Parlophone drum is cannily kept very quiet indeed. On the highest power of the brass (p. 88 of the min. score, and similar places) I find a trace of shriek in the new records; but it must be remembered that no gramophone is equally good for every kind of record, and this may possibly be the result of some weakness in mine. The Parlophone records are so cheap that they may be considered a very good investment, as the whole work can be had for 13s. 6d.

Der Lustige Krieg is not the work of the *Tod* Strauss, but of Johann, of *Blue Danube* fame. Mozart has a funny bed-fellow. This slick music has a few superficially attractive tunes, a military swagger, and precious little musical value. The *Seraglio* is given with the right jaunty swing. The jolly music well befits that admirable punch-mixture of musical comedy, pantomime, farce, and grand opera, that I wish our B.N.O.C. would keep it in the front of its repertory always. Anyone who remembers Radford in it, hugely comic, singing the advice to "Keep your eye on your little lady," will agree. The change of mood to the second tune in the overture is startling. This is beautifully delivered. The orchestra has an admirable kind of spacious discretion in the giving out of tunes like this. It lets them sing, as far as ever possible on the record.

The Massenet movements are delivered with aplomb. The colour is vivid, the brushwork, so to speak, vigorous and solid. These light recreations are quite the thing for moments when one doesn't want particularly to do anything but lean back and be mildly stimulated.

Extase is a sentimental trifle for which *Narcissus* forms a good stable companion. The unlinked sweetness of these lollipops is well "got over" by the orchestra, the bits of lighter orchestration being neatly effective. I am left in a trifling doubt, though, as to the exact rhythm of the opening phrase of *Narcissus*, by the way in which it is given out. It seems to have lost a little of the lilt that it had in my early days.

The Gluck air is one of those pieces of clean and pure accomplishment that this master gives us so often. He strikes the emotional note so surely, with the very shape and lie of the introductory melody, and its grave yet sweet harmonies. The singer, apart from a tendency to become slightly unsteady on notes that have much pressure behind them, has a voice befitting the music. She is even better in the Mozart air, which she fills with beautiful tone, rounded and rich. The situation is dramatically as well as

Articles on the forthcoming season at the Covent Garden Opera House from the pen of Mr. Herman Klein, this year's president of the Critics' Circle, will appear in the June and July numbers.

musically realised—made real with admirable art. This is a very beautiful bit of work.

Melany Kurt, in keeping so well "on top" of the music in the *Tristan* extract, seems to me rather to make the upward leaps a little too strenuous. The mean between shouting and holding one's own here is hard to come at, I admit; and this singer deserves praise for the power and pulse of her singing. The orchestra is excellent.

Nothing more lovely than the *Mastersingers* quintet ever welled from the mind of Wagner. The music flows so nobly along, distilling the essence of pure beauty. I do not find the voices perfectly admirably blended here. The men dominate, and the tone of at least one is not very good. I liked the H.M.V. record of this (in the set issued a year or so ago) ever so much better. Few "stars" there be who, in concerted music, can be really kind to each other (and, what is more important, to the composer).

K. K.

BRUNSWICK

(April issues.)

15093 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Sigrid Onegin** (contralto) and **Mario Chamlee** (tenor): *Ai nostri monti* and *Mal reggendo all'aspro assalto* from *Trovatore*.

10155 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Mishel Piastro** (violin): *Hymn to the Sun* (Rimsky-Korsakow) and *Heart of Harlequin* (Drigo-Auer).

15090 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Cleveland Orchestra**, conducted by Nicolai Sokoloff: *Prelude to Act 3* and *Wedding Music* from *Lohengrin* (Wagner).

Once again the most serious fault of the Brunswick list is its brevity. The general level of the recording is distinctly good, and the surface noise is not sufficient to disturb the listener. But it is rather unsafe to generalise from three double-sided 10-in. records and that is all I have for review.

Sigrid Onegin and Mario Chamlee.—Sigrid Onegin's singing has commanded our admiration before now and this performance only enhances an already solid reputation. But it is otherwise with Chamlee, and after the hard things I have said about him I take particular pleasure in acknowledging the excellence of this rendering of his. Apart from a faint suggestion of forcing in one, or at most two, places, he gives us little to criticise adversely and much to be grateful for. Of the two songs I much prefer *Ai nostri monti*. *Trovatore* is early Verdi, of course, but this song has real melodious charm without the clumsy squareness that disfigures the more martial (and slightly blatant) *Mal reggendo all'aspro assalto*.

Mishel Piastro.—I have already protested in THE GRAMOPHONE against the iniquity of playing the *Hymn to the Sun* as an elaborate violin solo, in direct defiance of the composer's expressed wishes. Piastro seems to have been aware that he was committing a crime, and the shrillness of his tone on some occasions and the sketchiness of his execution on others, are, I hope, the result of a guilty conscience. For the inanity of the final cadence (which is not Rimsky-Korsakoff's) I have no words. The player is much happier in *Heart of Harlequin*, a difficult but dainty trifle which he handles deftly.

Cleveland Orchestra.—On the whole this version of the opening of the third act of *Lohengrin* on a 10in. record is to be welcomed. The scoring of the *Introduction* is very full and it is something of an achievement to get the effect with so little trace of "blast." My only serious criticism has reference to the beginning of the lovely oboe solo in the middle. The melody starts with two low D's and then rises to two B's. Owing to some accident the B's are hardly audible.

The *Bridal Chorus* (to give it its proper title) follows the *Introduction* with only a bar or two's break. One misses the voices, of course, but otherwise the rendering is satisfactory. If the rhythm seems a little "stodgy" one must remember the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory "flow" in a series of such square phrases. The limits of a small record have necessitated two cuts in this piece, but they have been discreetly made.

P.P.

VOCALION.

(April issues.)

B.3118 (10in., 4s.).—**John Coates** (tenor): *Linden Lea* (Vaughan Williams) and *The Pretty Creature* (Storace, arr. Lane Wilson) Piano, Berkeley Mason.

A.0230 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Vladimir Rosing** (tenor): *Song of the Volga Boatmen* (arr. Chaliapine-Koeneman) and *Volga Lullaby* (Ostrovsky-Arensky).

A.0231 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Sapellnikoff** (pianist): *Waldesrauschen* (Liszt) and *Valse in E flat* (Sapellnikoff).

K.05154 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Kathleen Destournel** (soprano): *Vissi d'arte* from *La Tosca* (Puccini) and *Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante* from *Carmen* (Bizet).

K.05153 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Titterton** (tenor) and **McEachern** (bass): *The Battle Eve* (Bonheur) and *Flow gently, Deva* (John Parry). Piano, Stanley Chapple.

X.9543 (10in., 3s.).—**McEachern** (bass): *I love zomeone in Zummerset* (Bert Lee—Sterndale Bennett) and *Out on the Deep* (F. H. Lühr).

X.9542 (10in., 3s.).—**Morlais Morgan** (baritone): *At Grendon Fair* (Paul Marie) and *Rolling down to Rio* (Ed. German).

K.05155 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Sammons** (violin) and **Ethel Hobday** (piano): *Sonata in A, Op. 1, No. 3* (Handel).

K.05156 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Howard Bliss** ('cello): *Romance, Op. 51* and *Allegro Appassionata, Op. 43* (Saint-Saëns). Piano, Stanley Chapple.

X.9554, 9555, 9556 (10in., 9s.).—**Spencer Dyke String Quartet**: *Quartet in D major, Op. 64, No. 5* (Haydn).

The Vocalion list this month seems to me unusually good. There are several really remarkable records and very few that are not at least fairly satisfactory. The more I hear of the work of this company in its new form the more I am impressed by its excellence. The lowness of the prices is already well known.

Coates.—*The Pretty Creature* is one of the most dainty of the Elizabethan songs arranged by Lane Wilson, and the whimsical freedom of the rendering is just what the music requires. *Linden Lea* is a fine specimen of strong straightforward melody such as we might expect from a student of English folk-music who is also a great composer. I am not quite sure that I sympathise entirely with the few liberties that the singer takes in this latter song; they seem hardly consistent with the Somersetshire dialect he so successfully assumes. But the record is a very fine one indeed, the best I know of John Coates (and the best I have heard of *Linden Lea*). The renderings are perfectly artistic, every word is clear, and the songs themselves are worth the trouble.

Rosing.—Here is another good record and cheap at the price. The singing is notably free from those mannerisms that are sometimes so prominent in Rosing's renderings, and both songs are fine music. *The Song of the Volga Boatmen* is so inseparably connected in the minds of most of us with Chaliapine's record of it that we are almost unwilling to hear another singer attempt it; but Rosing knows that record as well as we do, and has learned its lesson. The voice is different in range and quality, but the performance is only less fine than Chaliapine's in spite of the rather disconcerting nature of the orchestral part at the beginning and the end. *The Volga Lullaby* is a song of a similar kind well orchestrated and with a very long falsetto note at the end—Rosing's only effect and a justifiable one.

Sapellnikoff.—The Vocalion piano recordings are certainly first-rate. Sapellnikoff's record last month aroused my warmest admiration, and this one is hardly, if at all, inferior to it. The familiar Liszt piece may not amount to much, but it is more melodious and less bombastic than most of the recorded piano music by this composer. As to the pianist's own *Valse* it is difficult to say anything new about a form which has been so thoroughly exploited by Weber, Chopin, Johann Strauss, and others; but at least Sapellnikoff's little work is graceful and brilliant—and as musicianly as his playing.

Destournel.—It is refreshing to hear such a workmanlike rendering of operatic music. Kathleen Destournel shows herself singularly free from the vices of the "star" and gives us the music as Puccini or Bizet wrote it. I have heard the *Vissi d'arte* more dramatically sung and I have heard it used to display a greater voice than Kathleen Destournel's; but I know of no rendering

which is more faithful to the score. This virtue in singing (which extends to the *Carmen* song as well) combined with the excellence of the orchestral recording enables one to appreciate points in both compositions that are too often obscured by an overwhelming volume of sound and a distorted rhythm. The voice itself is pleasant, and quite large enough for what is required of it.

Titterton and McEachern.—These two duets would be popular at a smoking concert. *The Battle Eve* is just what the title leads one to expect. *Flow gently, Deva* starts rather charmingly, somewhat after the manner of Mendelssohn, but falls off later, it seems to me. McEachern's rich and rather "fruity" bass is occasionally a little too heavy for a perfect balance, especially in *The Battle Eve*.

McEachern.—Here again are two songs sufficiently described by their titles. *I love someone* is a pleasant piece largely on account of the words, which come out well. I should like to hear Mr. Plunket Greene sing this; but McEachern's rendering is quite good—and cheap. *Out on the Deep* did not interest me much.

Morlais Morgan.—At *Grendon Fair* was recorded a little while ago by Peter Dawson for H.M.V. I cannot at the moment recall a record of *Rolling down to Rio*, but surely there is one? Be that as it may, Morlais Morgan has given us quite an adequate performance. He is perhaps a little too free with the rhythm, but his diction is excellent, and that covers a multitude of sins.

Sammons and Hobday.—We should be grateful to Albert Sammons for recording this genial and popular sonata of Handel's. I have mislaid my score, but so far as my memory serves me I believe the rendering is complete. The abilities of the player are well known and I would only point to the *Cantabile* of the first movement and the steady rhythm of the last as examples of his fine artistry. The balance between violin and piano is also exceptionally good.

Bliss.—It is impossible to regard these pieces as great music. The material indeed is of the slenderest; but though Saint-Saëns was not a great composer he was a supreme craftsman, and the record can be confidently recommended to those who appreciate finished workmanship in the music itself, and good tone, true intonation, sure execution, and a well-balanced conception in the interpreter.

The surfaces of all these records are good and there is a welcome absence of scratch. P.P.

CHORAL RECORDS ON PARLOPHONE

By the Irmeler Ladies' Madrigal Choir.

E.10267 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Ich wollt' meine Liebe ergösse sich (I would that my love) and Gruss—Wohin ich geh und schaue (Greetings)* (Mendelssohn).

E.10268 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Abendlied (Evening Song)* (Mendelssohn) and *An der Wiege—Schlafe, schlafe (Lullaby)* (Schubert).

E.10269 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Wenn die Rosen blühen (When the roses bloom)* (Reichardt) and *Ave Maria* (Luigi Luzzi).

Choral music was once the Cinderella of the disc. After a very few oratorio choruses by the Sheffield Choir, done in comparatively early days, and one or two indifferent attempts by presumably scratch (and certainly frequently scratchy) "choirs" in operatic snippets, came the English Singers' madrigals, done by H.M.V., and, later, the Wagner opera extracts, containing few examples of choral work, but some of the most effective recorded. There are also, of course, the Gilbert and Sullivan choruses that I have not, frankly, been able to enjoy quite fully. The singers were, of course, mostly tested in one particular style of choralism, and that not the best adapted for showing a choir's qualities.

The Parlophone *Palestrina*, by the Roman Choir, was the latest example of recorded choralism. In these notable discs, I had a doubt about the wisdom of employing so large a choir. The Irmeler Ladies' Choir sounds of just the right size for effective reproduction. If too many voices are employed (and particularly if any one of them wobbles in the slightest), the tone is most evilly affected, in gramophone work. The vital importance of eliminating every voice not absolutely perfect in intonation has never been realised yet. A slight oscillation that may not afflict one in hearing a choir "at first ear" disturbs the balance in recording. In the H.M.V. madrigals, where one voice to a part was the rule, a great

strain of responsibility was upon each—a strain that one voice, at least, was not always able to bear without discomforting us occasionally. The involved part-writing of the madrigal, again, is a very different thing from the simple harmonies of the part-songs under discussion.

I should like to hear these accomplished ladies in some of the madrigals arranged for women's voices published recently by Stainer and Bell and Novello. Their technique promises that in the supreme test of madrigal singing they would not be found wanting in subtlety and poise—the highest attributes, and the most vital. Their name indicates that they do sing madrigals. I hope they will soon give us some examples of their skill in this kind.

At first hearing, and without having been able to play any of these records immediately before and after any other examples of recorded choral singing, I am inclined to say that the Irmeler Choir outdistances any other I have heard in this way. The chief defects of women's voices are almost all absent—the hootiness or bleat of the lower parts, and the veiled quality of the middle voices. The tone keeps a high level of steadiness. The balance is neatly maintained. Whether one always likes the occasional soloing of the soprano part is a matter of choice. It is never offensive. The singer of this part, apart from a slight over-intensity on loud high notes at moments, keeps within the picture.

The first two Mendelssohns (which are arranged from two-part songs) have something of that gently effervescent happiness that is so pleasant a feature of the composer's music in gentler vein. The *Evening Song*, with the Schubert (which I feel is just a trifle over-loaded in this arrangement), evokes that sweet atmosphere of peaceful contemplation, of memories of childhood, that distinguishes this particular corner of German art, and makes it a welcome contribution to musical thought—not deep, but full of simple kindness and honest sentiment. In this kind of music I find the Choir even more effective than in the first record.

Reichardt, I presume (speaking without the printed notes from the Company), is that Court Director under Frederick the Great who did good work by producing unfamiliar music. Pratt, in his "New Encyclopaedia," remarks that his vocal works have importance in the development of the song and the "singspiel"—the simple opera with spoken dialogue, songs and part-songs, that was so popular with the people in the eighteenth century Germany. His recorded piece is of simple construction, graceful contour, and agreeably artistic reticence. The solo voice takes the first verse and the choir the second. The accompaniments (strings and piano, to most of the songs) blend charmingly.

Luzzi's *Ave Maria* is more conventional, though not without its note of freshness. His name is little familiar among those of writers of the last century, though he wrote operas and a symphony.

I hope the choir will give us more records, not forgetting to delve a little deeper, and give us some Brahms, Schumann, and so on. One or two British works would be welcome. There is, for instance, an excellent short work by Harold Darke, *As the Leaves Fall* (Stainer and Bell), and William Wolstenholme has done some delightful things for female voices (Novello). These first samples certainly give us a taste for more. K.K.

The Wilson Protractor.

Those of our readers who were prudent enough to order the protractor in order to test the needle track alignment of their machines—or perhaps for the malicious purpose of proving the outrageous error of their friends' machines—have scored. They got the protractor at less than cost price. The first order having been exhausted, we are having some more printed, and these will be on sale at 1s. each. Readers are advised to order them from their dealers or else to send 1s. 2d. to the London office.

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April Supplement.

Vocals

- 1416 { At the End of the Road (Hanley and Macdonald).
Sung by Robert Craig, with Orchestral Accomp.
June Night (Cliff Friend and Abel Baer).
Sung by Billy Burton, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1415 { After the Storm (Jack Nelson).
Sung by Eric Laurence, with Orchestral Accomp.
I'm in Love with You, My Love (Are You in Love with Me)
(Pat Thayer).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1414 { By the Lake (Arthur Lange).
Sung by Danny O'Moore, with Orchestral Accomp.
The 31st of April (S. E. T. Evans).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
- 1413 { Show Me the Way to Go Home (Irving King).
Sung by Mr. John Boyd, accompanied by The Imperial Trio.
Must You Break My Heart (Newton, Milne and Silver).
Sung by Mr. John Boyd, accompanied by The Imperial Trio.
- 1412 { La Donna è Mobile (Rigoletto) (Verdi). Tenor Solo. In Italian.
Sung by Signor Luigi Cilla (from the Scala, Milan).
On with the Motley (Pagliacci) (Leoncavallo). Tenor Solo. In Italian.
Sung by Signor Luigi Cilla (from the Scala, Milan).

Dances

- 1417 { Rose Marie (from "Rose Marie") (Rudolf Friml). Fox Trot.
Played by The Golden Gate Orchestra.
Indian Love Call (from "Rose Marie") (Rudolf Friml). Fox Trot.
Played by The Bar Harbor Orchestra.

Dances—continued.

- 1411 { Tea for Two (from "No, No, Nanette") (Vincent Youmans). Fox
Trot. Played by The Wigwam Orchestra.
I Want to be Happy (from "No, No, Nanette") (Vincent Youmans).
Fox Trot. Played by The Imperial Dance Orchestra.
- 1410 { I Love the Moon (Paul Rubens). Waltz.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Love's Dream (Arr. by E. J. B.). Waltz.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
- 1409 { Golden West (Horatio Nicholls). Waltz.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Let Me be the First to Kiss You Good Morning (Bernard and
Robinson). Fox Trot. Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
- 1408 { Me and the Boy Friend (Clare-Monaco). Fox Trot.
Played by The Newport Society Orchestra.
Doo Wacka Doo (Walter Donovan). Fox Trot.
Played by The Missouri Jazz Band.
- 1407 { O, Katherina (from "Chauve Souris") (Gilbert and Field). Fox
Trot. Played by Ben Selvin and His Orchestra.
Back Where the Daffodils Grow (Walter Donaldson). Fox Trot.
Played by The Missouri Jazz Band.
- 1406 { How Do You Do (Harrison de Voll). Fox Trot.
Played by The Imperial Dance Orchestra.
Gotta Getta Girl (Gus Kahn-Isham-Jones). Fox Trot.
Played by The Hollywood Dance Orchestra.

A SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF NEW TITLES WILL BE ISSUED MONTHLY.

Apply for particulars to the Crystalate Mfg. Co., Ltd., Town Works,
Tonbridge, Kent, the oldest makers of Disc Records in Great Britain.
London dealers should write for supplies to 63, Farringdon Road, London, E.C.



THE NEW-POOR PAGE

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THE other day a boy brought a parcel to my house while I was trying over a Grosvenor Orchestra record. When the maid went to the door to take the parcel the boy said to her: "Listen, where's that?" The maid said: "That's nothing, only our gramophone." And the boy replied: "A gramophone! I thought it was *music*." Well, I, too, thought it was music, and I think all the records I am mentioning this month are Music—with a capital M please, printer. Never has there been such an embarrassment of riches among the cheap records in any one month since I bought my first gramophone.

ACO.—For BASSO recording I know of nothing to equal the Vocalion series, so first of all I will mention that delightful old half-nonsense song now a classic, *Twankydllo*, sung by Lewis Endersby. The Grosvenor Orchestra is at its best in the light numbers, *Fifinette* and *The Butterfly*, the flute solo in the latter being well recorded. A fine BARITONE song is *The Red Star of the Romany*. Very clean playing and vigorous recording is shown in the VIOLIN AND PIANO number *Liebesfreud*. *Still as the Night* is nicely sung, in English, by Elsie Fisher, SOPRANO, but, oh! I did so miss the poetically contrasted sweetness and fire of the original German. The INSTRUMENTAL TRIO, *Fantasie Concertante*, is very good of its kind. Billy Desmond, that sweet and altogether gentlemanly singer of popular songs, has the best *Tea for Two* I have heard, but I like much better his *Lovers' Lane*.

BELTONA.—*The Song of the Volga Boatmen*, sung by Eliot Dobie, is really grand, but it calls for a quiet needle, or one misses the first twenty bars. SOPRANO: Ethel Kemish sings *I love the Moon* very nicely. This war-time warble seems to be having a resurrection. Two good MILITARY BAND numbers are *March of the Warriors* (*Coppelia*) and *Wedding of the Rose*. WALTZ: The best record I have of *I love the Moon*. FOX TROTS: There is one really grand thing, such an example of original writing and strong drum recording, *Indian Love Call*. Also the best example I have of the *I want to be Happy* trot (*No, No, Nanette*). SCOTS' NUMBERS: *Land of the Leal*, sung by a tenor, and *Mrs. Gordon's Strathspey*, violin and piano.

GRATTON.—Knowing I like to hear the drum in a record, a friend has sent me the very fine *Doo Wacka Doo*, the best I have heard. He tells me these records are from American matrices, and that they sell at 2s. each. The first part of the statement is easy to believe, but the second part is not, for the manufacture of the disc is equal to the very best.

IMPERIAL.—There are all the current popular numbers on this wonderful 2s. list, but I am passing them by to call attention better to a real new-poor record, *La Donna è Mobile* and *On with the Motley*, on one disc and sung in Italian by a TENOR, Signor Luigi Cilla, of the Scala, Milan. For purity of vocal tone and vigour of recording this equals their wonderful *Noel Païen* mentioned by me some months ago.

PARLOPHONE.—Leaders in vigorous and well-balanced orchestral recording, the issue this month includes my first SELECTION from *No, No, Nanette*, filling both sides of a disc. From Irving Berlin's "The Music Box Revue" there is *Tokio Blues* and *Tell Her on*

one disc. Edith Lorand's Orchestra (*not jazz*) plays *Passione*, valse-intermezzo by Virgilio Pangato, just as it should be played. Vincent Lopez, to me the incomparable for JAZZ, will, I am told, arrive in this country on the 11th inst. and will be playing at the new hall in Regent Street and then again after supper at the Kit Kat Club; he is well represented in this list by *Madeline*.

REGAL.—Lovers of the perfect surface of these records will find all the popular music of the month on the list, but playing the duet for two accordions, *Castle Heidesberg*, reminded me to call the attention of all owners of portables who are buying records for out-of-doors use during the summer to the fact that nothing comes out quite so purely, so prettily, so near the original in actual value, as the concertina recordings of Alex. Prince and the accordion numbers on this list.

WINNER.—Masons and liverymen who own gramophones, surely every one of them will buy the rendering of the Laudi Spirituali Quartette, called simply *The Grace*, sung by the Salisbury Singers. When I am playing it I cut out all but four bars of the feeble prelude. There is a most beautiful CYMBALA (a big dulcimer for several players) solo, *Hungarian Fantasie*. POPULAR SONG: Robert Carr sings *Just because the Violets* quite nicely.

ZONO.—This perfect vocal recording is well shown in two POPULAR SONGS, *Dream-maker of Japan*, Browning Mummery, and *What does it Matter*, Foster Richardson.

The whole list this month is so good it is difficult to select the cream, but roughly it is as follows:—

SOPRANO: *I love the Moon* (Beltona).

TENOR: *On with the Motley* (Imperial).

BASS: *Twankydllo* (Aco).

POPULAR SONG: *Lovers' Lane* (Aco).

VOCAL QUARTETTE: *The Grace* (Winner).

ORCHESTRAL: *Passione* (Parlo.).

JAZZ: *Madeline* (Parlo.) and *Indian Love Call* (Beltona).

CYMBALA: *Hungarian Fantasie* (Winner).

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.

FOR SALE—the model "SONATAB" described with a photograph in the April number. It includes a Thorens £6 motor, and a Jewel Tone Arm and Soundbox (£2 15s.) mounted on a Solid Oak Table, and is in perfectly running order, as delivered to the London Office by Captain Barnett. Price £8 to the first reader whose application is received. Write to The Manager, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.

BAND RECORDS

ACO.—F.33067 (12in., 4s.).—Australian Newcastle Steelworks Band: *Reminiscences of Tchaikowsky, Parts 1 and 2* (arr. Shipley Douglas).

ACO.—G.15643 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Americana Suite—The Water-Melon Fête and The Tiger's Tail March* (Thurban).

COLUMBIA.—9029 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards: *Wine, Women, and Song Waltz* (Strauss) and *In a Clock Store* (descriptive) (Orth).

H.M.V.—D.787 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Leila Megane and Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Land of Hope and Glory* (Elgar) and *Leila Megane* ('cello obbligato by Cedric Sharpe): *A Summer Night* (Goring Thomas).

H.M.V.—B.1966 (10in., 3s.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Third Battalion March* (Egerton) and *King's Guards' March* (Keith).

In *Reminiscences of Tchaikowsky* the members of the Steel Works Band have excelled themselves. The record can perhaps best be praised with faint damns, for the only fault I can find is that in the finale from the "1812" Overture (at the end of the second side) the interpretation is a shade stiff and inflexible and the intonation a trifle faulty. I like this arrangement, personally, better than a similar one by Mr. Rimmer and Tchaikowsky's music bears cutting up and re-arranging far better than Wagner's, a selection of whose music, played by this band, has been issued previously. This should be a very popular record, containing as it does excerpts from the *Chanson sans Paroles*, the *Trepak* and *Valse des Fleurs* from the *Casse Noisette Suite*, and the "1812" Overture. The volume and balance of tone throughout is a triumph of recording, while the precision of the playing—particularly in the *Trepak*—can only be compared with that of a Guards band. The wistful tone of the cornets and sopranos suits such music as the *Chanson sans Paroles* and *Valse des Fleurs* to perfection. If any one instrument is to be singled out for special praise it must be the sopranos which are particularly beautiful in some of the runs and remind one of the playing of Mr. Brooks, of the Horwich R.M.I. Band—perhaps the finest soprano player in the world.

The playing of the Welsh Guards Band in the *Tiger's Tail March* is particularly crisp, but the recording is not uniformly good throughout. In one place the castanets are so loud as to almost drown the air played (so far as it is possible to judge) on the bassoon; perhaps doubled in the brass. This suite, which must have been written many years, is another proof that trombone glissandos are not an invention of modern jazz. The *Water-Melon Fête* is very "descriptive" and defies analysis. You either like it or you don't. I don't!

How refreshing it is to hear a Strauss waltz after those in vogue nowadays. *Wine, women, and song* contains seven or eight really attractive tunes, any one of which would, if written to-day, stamp a waltz at once as distinctly above the average. I cannot help feeling, however, that this sort of music is better suited to Marek Weber than to a military band—even the Grenadier Guards. Perhaps their very precision is their own undoing here. I said enough last month about *In a Clock Store*. This version is, of course, far better played, but is it worth it?

In many respects a military band is a better medium for accompanying a song for gramophone purposes than an orchestra, and *Land of Hope and Glory* is, of course, a song which lends itself to such treatment. Even so this record is rather a disappointment. The balance between band and voice is very well maintained and, moreover, without giving that impression—so common, unfortunately—of special placing, etc., to secure balance, while the playing of the band is very good except that the cornets are a little too prominent. In spite of this the record does not quite "come off." I am at a loss where to lay the blame unless it be the arrangement of the score, and this I doubt. At any rate, the record is well worth buying for though it is out of my province to say anything about the other side I cannot help saying that I have rarely heard a record in which the voice, piano, and 'cello blend so beautifully. This record was issued some time ago and has found its way into my parcel because of the band accompaniment.

The two marches played by the Coldstream Guards Band combine to make a splendid little record and how much would not some of us have given a few years ago to have had a band like this to play us home from a long route march in the early days of our training! Of the two I prefer the *King's Guards' March*, the instrumentation in which strikes one as more finished and fuller

than in the *Third Battalion March*, which, however, only suffers by comparison. It is a revelation in tone to hear it played with a Columbia De-Luxe needle. The flute in the middle section is really beautiful, while I don't think that the side drum has ever been better recorded. The *Third Battalion March* should not be played with a full-tone needle or the clarinets may sound rather harsh and strident.

W. A. C.

PRINCESS IDA

(Gilbert and Sullivan.)

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.977 to D.986 (12in., d.s., 6s. 6d. each. Complete Opera in Album, £3 5s.).

Characters and Soloists.—King Hildebrand, Leo Sheffield; Hilarion (his son), Derek Oldham; Cyril and Florian (hilarious friends), Leo Darnton and Sydney Granville; King Gama, Henry A. Lytton; Arac, Guron, and Scynthius (his sons), Darrell Fancourt, Leonard Hubbard, and Edward Halland; Princess Ida (Gama's daughter), Winifred Lawson; Lady Blanche, Bertha Lewis; Lady Psyche, Kathleen Anderson; Melissa, Eileen Sharp. Chorus of soldiers, courtiers, girl graduates, etc. (First public performance, Savoy Theatre, January 5th, 1884.)

To lovers of the inimitable Gilbert and Sullivan operas the story of *Princess Ida* (or the *Castle Adamant*) will not be unknown. The Gramophone Company has produced the opera under the personal supervision of Rupert D'Oyly Carte and the result is what one would expect from such a combination. The whole opera is complete on twenty 12in. records and issued in an artistic album, inside the cover of which is a comprehensive survey of the plot with references to the records. It is indeed gratifying that although *Princess Ida* is not so universally appreciated as, for instance, *The Mikado*, *Yeomen of the Guard*, or *The Gondoliers*, the Gramophone Company have decided the opera to be of sufficient importance and interest to warrant the great expense of adding it to their catalogue.

With but two exceptions this set of records is made entirely by members of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and their efforts have resulted in an exceptionally enjoyable performance. One of the most outstanding features is the clearness of diction and the immediate recognition of the singers' vocal timbre and characteristics; this applies particularly to the songs of Henry Lytton (as King Gama) and Eileen Sharp (as Melissa). The familiar humour of Lytton, coupled with the intonation which is so well known to his followers, is faithfully recorded—one misses only his physical presence. His two best songs are *Most Politely* (perhaps if you address the lady) and *If you give me your attention* (D.979). It is a pity that in some of her songs Eileen Sharp is a little inclined to vary her pitch, but apart from this her diction and verve leave nothing to be desired. The singing of Bertha Lewis and Derek Oldham (the latter being one of the exceptions previously mentioned) is very rhythmic, and good tone and balance is maintained throughout. Bertha Lewis is heard to the best advantage in *Come mighty must* (D.981). Another number which goes with a swing is *I am a maiden, cold and stately* (D.982), in which Derek Oldham's voice is given full scope; he makes the fullest use of the opportunities with excellent result. Gaiety and abandon marks the singing of *Would you know the kind of maid*, by Leo Darnton (D.983); this is followed by *Oh! Joy, our chief is saved*, rendered by principals and chorus.

The chorus is, generally speaking, very good. Here and there a tendency to sing flat is perhaps not unusual in so protracted an undertaking. Their tone is sympathetic and in the *rubato* passages their flexible elasticity are so well controlled that the natural rhythm is never abused. The climaxes are well built up and approached with vigour. They are at their best in *When anger spreads his wing* (D.986), the tenors and basses being conspicuous for their clarity and diction.

Praise is justly due to the accompaniment, but no indication is given either in the preamble in the cover or on the records as to the identity of the orchestra or the conductor. This is a serious omission and should be soon rectified when a suitable opportunity presents itself. Both conductor and orchestra play a very important part in any production and their efforts deserve just as much recognition as the rest of the company.

His Master's Voice are to be congratulated on an achievement embracing not only a really good reproduction of the opera, but an exceptionally fine material result, and there is no hesitation in recommending all Savoyards to add *Princess Ida* to their collection.

G. R. H.

DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

SOME of those serious-minded people who went to the concerts given at the Queen's Hall by the Savoy Orpheans in order to judge syncopated music on its merits as music, and came away satisfied that it has a future apart from its use as an accompaniment to ballroom dancing, may cavil at the title that I have used for my notes from month to month. I plead for forgiveness; far from me was the desire to be dogmatic. Yet on thinking the matter over, although I am not prepared to deny the *potentialities* of syncopation, I must say for myself that the pleasure it gives me is purely sensuous. I should be the last to deny the extreme pleasure of sensuous impressions, and particularly of the actual pleasure I have in the very perceiving; but music is capable of greater gifts than this, and the secret of these greater gifts, it seems to me, is still denied to the more recent art of syncopation.

I suppose my choice of title was the subconscious expression of what I really thought about syncopated music, so far as it has developed at present; that is, that it is best suited to dancing, and thus that "Dance Notes" would be expected of me in criticising the records that are issued month by month. Again let me not be misunderstood. "Best" is merely a term of comparison: the conditions which would govern the "perfect" dance are seldom fulfilled even in part. Let us have entrancing melody, as well as compelling rhythm and perfect time, not to mention "Phyllis" with "such charming graces"—a Phyllis who is the very daughter of Terpsichore.

To most of us there comes a moment when this vision seems on the point of being fulfilled. But does this ever happen when dancing to the gramophone? Is it possible thus to attain that state of bliss when the music seems to become a part of one's self and to throb mysteriously as if unprompted by an alien agency? Some people complain, and frequently with justification, that when dancing to the gramophone one's attention must be riveted to the music if one is to hear it at all, and that pleasure is lost in consequence of this difficulty. The only answer to be made is that like everything else the gramophone has its limitations. Records vary considerably, it is quite true, in the volume of sound that they produce, loudness often being achieved only at the expense of everything else. "Tis true, 'tis pity; and pity 'tis 'tis true"; but one cannot blame a thing for its limitations, and the greatest pleasure and the least disappointment will be experienced in the long run if an attempt is made to discover these limitations as quickly as possible. This is the high road to improvement.

With most sound-boxes the gramophone has been suited only to the *danse intime*, and it has been through attempting to make it do what it is not capable of doing that it has been adversely criticised, and criticised unfairly. Within its limitations it can be no less good and even better than any other form of accompaniment that one is likely to be fortunate enough to enjoy. When the strident muted trumpets are silenced and the squawking saxophones have ceased to play their tricks, there come moments when "heartiness" and undiluted exuberance give way to the subtler pleasures derived from the pure melody of the violins, the oboe, and the saxophones—played as they should be played. To anyone with an eye to the main chance it must have been obvious how valuable an invention would be that could achieve loudness without affecting tone. This, it seems to me, has now been effected with a considerable measure of success.

These remarks are for those who have not yet had a chance of testing the Academy Gramophone Amplifier, which was first put on the market a few months ago by the Johnson Talking Machine Company. Not even the extent of the claims which the Company makes for its instrument, nor the confidence with which it asserts its certainty of success, although both are not a little disconcerting, prevents me from saying what a boon it should be to those dancers who are unable to afford expensive bands or have been dissatisfied with the results which they have obtained from standard sound-boxes.

The makers claim that it is "ideal for dancing," that "it will increase the volume of your existing gramophone tenfold," that "it gives absolutely true reproduction," its "clarity of tone" being "remarkable," etc., etc. What is of practical importance is that it can easily be fitted to any gramophone without any alteration whatever to the existing instrument. Moreover, it is simple to operate. This is saying a good deal, and its price, four

guineas, speaks (out loud) for itself. About that, however, we cannot grumble if the instrument does a fraction of what is claimed for it. That it increases the volume of sound by a very great deal it is well-nigh impossible to dispute, although I am not prepared to say how many times. Its clarity of tone, also, is quite surprising; and this is a fact that speaks volumes for the improvements which have been made recently in the mere mechanics of recording. It is, indeed, almost impossible to believe that the surface noises which are not even yet entirely absent when the best records are being played are multiplied in volume by this amplifier as many times as the sound of the actual tune. Surely this must be merely an illusion; but I leave myself open to correction by those who really know. If it is an illusion, it is at least a very happy one, and one of a kind that one might wish to experience more often. Another point in favour of this new invention is that it is so easily attached to almost any existing machine that is not exceptionally eccentrically made. This means that it can be used for this particular purpose of dancing and then detached in a moment if the gramophone is wanted for *other* purposes, although I by no means wish to suggest that it is not similarly effective with "serious" records, but it just happens as a matter of individual taste that I prefer to play most records rather more quietly than is possible with this instrument.

An innovation of this kind must be regarded by the smaller and lesser known dance bands as a serious menace to their existence. When it is possible by such simple means to have at one's beck and call all the finest orchestras in the world, almost as if they were present in the room in their own flesh and blood and whatever instruments are made of, surely there can be few people who would not prefer to use the gramophone. Perhaps this will mean that there will be a salutary improvement in the standard of performance among dance bands; if so, there will be nothing to regret. This is not intended as an unqualified panegyric, nor am I prompted by the makers to praise their machine; it is merely that I wish to bring it to the notice of those to whom it would be most useful. Let them try it first and by all means disagree with me if they feel inclined, but give it a *fair* trial and blame me not for the expense or for the consequences.

It would be easy to go on talking about *dancing* for ever and ever, but to do so in these columns would be out of place, even if it were possible, and I have no doubt that a new critic would appear next month to take my place, after a silent tragedy in Frith Street. Of the change there is always the possibility for many reasons. Firstly there is the danger of my vocabulary of adjectives running dry, and then, of course, there is always the possibility of insanity produced by a surfeit of gramophone records. In order to avoid the first of these dangers my readers are invited to say what features in a record they like best to be criticised, and, if they like, let them suggest the terms I should use, and I was going to say—write the article for me. But surrender is still a little way off, and it will be further postponed if help arrives soon in the form of criticism or suggestion.

Let me pander once again to the statisticians, or perhaps it would be truer to say, have a little bit of fun on my own. The tunes I have listened to this month have been six fewer in number than in March, although I hear a rumour of many late arrivals that can have only a short list to themselves at the end of this article, and will have to wait until next month for a more detailed examination. My mathematical mind likes to think that these six absent tunes consist of three friends whom I am loth to part with, and three enemies whose absence is a source of rejoicing; for I find to my humiliation and disappointment that there is no new tango recorded, and to my delight that there are three fewer one-steps. The waltz has gained while the fox-trot has lost one. The actual numbers are fox-trot, 87 sides, waltz 19, one-step 3. A guess at haphazard would be that there is more duplication of *tunes* than ever before. This is a pity, for "variety is the mother of enjoyment." But more of this later.

This month the fox-trot shall have pride of place on account of the furore that is raging about *No, No, Nanette*. Such has been the scramble to get in first with *Tea for Two* and *I want to be happy* that it is almost impossible to say to whom pride of place is due. But, what matters more than this from the dancer's point of view is: Which are the best renderings of the tunes? With little hesitation judgment goes to H.M.V. B.1978, 10in., 3s., *Tea for Two* being played by the Benson Orchestra, of Chicago, and *I want to be happy* by Jan Garber and his Orchestra. The former has a delightful "go" about it, the tune being played with the greatest possible effect, opening in a most intriguing way. The latter is a fairly straightforward rendering of another catchy-tune only inferior

to *Tea for Two* in popularity. The Vocalion record (X.9549, 10in., 3s.) runs the H.M.V. very close, Ben Bernie and his Hotel Roosevelt Orchestra being the executors. The reverse side of this record is occupied by *Take a little one-step*, another number from *No, No, Nanette*, played by the Bar Harbour Society Orchestra, not quite as good a tune as the others, but very well played. Max Darewski's Dance Band is responsible for the Zonophone *Tea for Two*, another good record, tunelessly played and with originality (2548, 10in., 2s. 6d.). The Parlophone record of the same tune is notable for its marvellous saxophones and wonderfully insistent rhythm; it is played comfortably fast by the Gotham Nightingales (E.5348, 10in., 2s. 6d.). The *Take a little one-step* on the other side is played by Eddie Elkins and his Orchestra. This tune is not as consistently exciting as *Tea for Two*, but it is certainly one good to dance to and possesses its own pleasing passages. Those with shallow purses will derive a great deal of pleasure from the Imperial record, 1411, 10in., 2s., which has on one side *Tea for Two*, played by the Wigwag Orchestra, and on the other *I want to be happy*, by the Imperial Dance Orchestra. So much for *No, No, Nanette*. Has it been over-estimated? Personally I am inclined to say: "Yes, a little." But perhaps this is because the popularity of *Tea for Two* has thrust my own particular favourite *Nola* into the background, with the result that there is no new record at all that is devoted to it. It was certainly last month's most notable fox-trot, and I think it beats any that have appeared since then. But no, there is an exception in *Titina* which is unusually pleasing (Vocalion X.9548, 10in., 3s.). The London Band under Emlyn Thomas, good as it always is, has simply surpassed itself. The pulsating accompaniment of *Titina*, notable for its beautiful orchestration, forms a splendid background for an enchanting melody which is entirely unspoiled by pseudo-popular tricks on the trumpet and the saxophone. All the instruments in the band are used to their best effect, the violin and the bass instruments calling for particular praise. Ben Selvin and his Orchestra, who play *Nancy*, which is on the reverse side, might well learn a lesson from the London Band. The tune is a good one, but it is played in such a way that each instrument simply clamours for attention and the vocal accompaniment is very poor. Nevertheless, no one should be without this *Titina*, and the record should be bought if only for the sake of this tune. It is invidious to mention other fox-trots after these because most of the rest compare so badly with them, not that the bands are bad as a rule, except when they indulge too much in fireworks, but that the tunes are so poverty-stricken. Thus an asterisk in my list at the end usually means that the record is well played, while two asterisks suggests there is at least some virtue in the tune. This does not apply in the case of tunes already well known. The Parlophone Company delights us again with two new 12in. fox-trots played by Marek Weber and his Orchestra, *After the storm* and *Burning kisses* (E.10261, 4s. 6d.), and *June night* and *May-time* (E.10262, 4s. 6d.). In the first there are wonderful storm effects which fade away in a most ingenious manner. One almost hears the lightning, instead of seeing it, as when John Birmingham played the tune with such effect recently at the Coliseum. The other tunes are played in the mellow tones for which this orchestra is justly famous and with Marek Weber's customary tact and technique. Glad as most of us are to have these records, there are some who complain that they are out of date. Let us, then, hope for something newer and trust to our good fortune.

The waltzes show a higher percentage of successes, but there is still a paucity of new tunes. H.M.V. 1986, 10in., 3s., is the best representative record, *Sumurun* and *Somewhere a voice is calling*, both played by the Savoy Havana Band. With *Sumurun* the Savoy Havana Band responds nobly to our constant expectations; it is a delightfully romantic tune, masterfully orchestrated and beautifully played. The other is a little sad and thoughtful, and none the worse for that on some occasions, but it is rather spoilt by a poor vocal accompaniment. The old favourites, or perhaps I should say recent favourites, are all here. There is *Haunting Melody* (Columbia 3573, 10in., 3s.), played with a hesitation; *In Shadowland* (Zonophone 2547, 10in., 2s. 6d.), with a little too much muted trumpet; and *I love the moon* partnered by *Dead Roses*, both played by the Edith Lorand Orchestra (Parlophone E.5344, 10in., 2s. 6d.). The latter is melodious and romantic and has a slight hesitation, the former, a waltz of the old school, is played very artistically and with fine rhythm. The one-steps labelled as such are simply not worthy of mention individually, but there are two fox-trots that are played so fast that they should satisfy the one-step fiends; *When I was the dandy and you were the belle*, played by the Lanin Orchestra (Parlophone E.5341, 10in.,

2s. 6d.) and *Keep smiling at trouble*, Waring's Pennsylvanians (H.M.V., B.1982, 10in., 3s.).

The month's crop has been a disappointment. On former occasions it has happened that when the more highly-priced records have failed to give us the pleasure we expected from them, we have been nobly compensated by the cheaper makes. This month we are disappointed all round. The Imperial list is again without any record by the Continental Dance Orchestra, which gave us that very good rendering of *Tropical Palms* a month or two ago, and we still look in vain for more 12in. records particularly of fox-trots. Surely they would be popular?

Here follows a list of those records which fall below the standard set by those mentioned in the course of my article, but which yet deserve mention:—

ACO (10in., 2s. 6d.).

G.15632.—**Until to-morrow* (the Old Virginians) and ***I want to be happy* (the Indian Melodists).

G.15648.—*On the Z.R.3* and ***Follow the Swallow* (both by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra). This is easily the best vocal record this month.

G.15650.—**Savoy English Medley* (one-step) and *Shanghai* (both by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).

G.15651.—**A new kind of man* (blues fox-trot) (the Ohio Novelty Band) and *Honest and truly* (waltz) (the Cleveland Society Orchestra).

COLUMBIA (10in., 3s.).

3592.—**Tea for two* and *I want to be happy* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).

3575.—*Show me the way* and *Nobody loves you like I do* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).

3579.—***When she's in red* and ***Why does a chicken cross the road* (one-step) (the New Prince's Toronto Band). This one-step was overlooked when writing my article. It has originality and intriguing variations of rhythm such as should please the expert one-stepper.

3611.—*I'll see you in my dreams* and *Will you remember me* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).

3613.—***Peter Pan, I love you* and **The only, only one* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).

H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

B.1977.—***Unfortunate Blues* (the Boston Orchestra) and *Nobody loves you but me* (the Romaine Orchestra).

B.1979.—***Where has my hubby gone* (blues) and **You can dance with any girl at all* (both by the Savoy Orpheans).

B.1980.—*In the town where I was born* and *I can't stop babying you* (both Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

B.1981.—**Shanghai* and **The only, only one for me* (both by the Savoy Orpheans).

B.1982.—*When the one you love loves you* (waltz) and **I'll see you in my dreams* (both by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra).

B.1987.—***My best girl* and ***Come on over* (both by the Savoy Orpheans).

B.1991.—***Indian love call* and ***Rose Marie* (both by Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra).

IMPERIAL (10in., 2s.).

1407.—*O, Katherina* (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra) and *Back where the daffodils grow* (Missouri Jazz Band).

1417.—*Rose Marie* (the Golden Gate Orchestra) and *Indian love call* (the Bar Harbour Society Orchestra).

PARLOPHONE (10in., 2s. 6d.).

E.5342.—***Bye-bye Baby* and ***A sun kist cottage in California* (Ace Brigode and his Fourteen Virginians).

E.5343.—***Valse Espagnole* (waltz) and ***One year of love* (both by the Bohemian Orchestra).

E.5349.—**I want to be happy* and *Dreamer of dreams* (waltz) (Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra).

E.5338.—***Mee Neenyah* and **A waltz in the moonlight and you* (vocal waltz) (Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra).

E.5340.—**Haunting Melody* (waltz) and ***Back where the daffodils grow* (both by the Yellow Jackets).

VOCALION (10in., 3s.).

9547.—**Childhood's Memories* (one-step) and **Shanghai* (both by the London Band).

9551.—***Day dreaming* (waltz) (Ben Selvin and his Orchestra) and ***Where's my sweetie hiding* (Ben Bernie and his Orchestra).

BRUNSWICK (10in., 3s.).

- 2741.—**Eliza* and *Mandy, make up your mind* (both by the Oriole Orchestra).
 2742.—***All alone* and **Out of a million* (both by Abe Lyman's Californian Orchestra). Here is *All Alone* as a fox-trot for those who like it.

The above list (all fox-trots except when mentioned) consists of records too many to mention individually, starred according to their relative merits. One asterisk usually draws attention to the band; two, to both tune and performance. The list which follows consists of the best of the records which have arrived too late for anything except a very cursory examination.

COLUMBIA (12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 3s.).

- *9032 (12in.).—*Carnival Children* (waltz) and *Twirling Millions* (waltz) (both by Geiger Orchestra).
 3616 (10in.).—*On the Z.R.3* and *Because they all love you* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).
 3617 (10in.).—*Lover's Waltz* and *That soothing melody* (waltzes) (both by Hannan Dance Band).
 *3618 (10in.).—*Oh, Flo!* and *Everybody loves my baby* (both by Hannan Dance Band).
 3619 (10in.).—*Tell-tale Eyes* and *When I think of you* (both by Hannan Dance Band).
 3620 (10in.).—*Leander* and *Just for a night* (both by Hannan Dance Band).

- 3621 (10in.).—*Kongo Kate* (one-step) and *Sometime* (waltz) (both by New Princes' Toronto Band).
 *3622 (10in.).—*Melody* and *You can take me from Dixie* (both by New Princes' Toronto Band).
 3633 (10in.).—*Show me the way to go home* and *If I had only known* (waltz) (both by New Princes' Toronto Band).
 *3634 (10in.).—*Mee Neenyah* and *Alabamy Bound* (both by Hannan Dance Band).
 3635 (10in.).—*All Alone* (Paul Specht and his Orchestra) and *No wonder* (the Hannan Dance Band).
 3636 (10in.).—*No one to love* and *I can't stop babying you* (both by the Hannan Dance Band).

PARLOPHONE. 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d.

- *E.10276 (12in.).—*The girl you're with belongs to me* and *Je vous aime* (both by Marek Weber).
 *E.10277 (12in.).—*Violetta* and *Reigen* (waltzes) (both by Marek Weber).
 **E.5354 (10in.).—*Madeline* and *Will you remember me?* (both by Vincent Lopez).
 E.5355 (10in.).—*Shanghai* and *Alabamy bound* (both by Marlborough Dance Orchestra).
 E.5356 (10in.).—*Savannah* and *Sweet little you* (both by Parlophone Syncopaters).
 *E.5357 (10in.).—*Tell her in the spring time* and *Tokio Blues* (both by the Melody Sheiks).
 E.5353 (10in.).—*Wait a bit*, *Susie* and *Naughty Baby* (both by the Marlborough Dance Orchestra).



Book Reviews

MUSIC AND BOYHOOD. By Thomas Wood. (Oxford University Press, 3/6.)

This little book is issued in the same series as Edwin Evans' *The Margin of Music*, recently reviewed in these columns. The blue label still defaces the marbled cover: it is painful to find one's strictures thus disregarded!

It is to be hoped the title of the book will not lead people into supposing it to be a dreary volume of childish reminiscences: that is those people who are not familiar with the admirable work Dr. Wood is doing at Tonbridge School. The sub-title—"Some suggestions on the possibilities of Music in Public, Preparatory, and other Schools"—has an intriguing sound. Even if we are not teachers of music we want to read about what the lucky youths of to-day are getting, if only to grumble "When I was a boy—." Those of us who have boys to send to school should read the book with avidity. It is illumined with a delightful humour, it is compact of sound common-sense. Evidently music at Tonbridge is not practised solely by non-athletic dreamers, but also by vigorous game-players. In spite of difficulties of all kinds everyone has a share in musical activities; in a word, and an all-powerful one in the school world, IT IS DONE!

I should want to quote every chapter if I once began; so to whet your appetite here is a quite irrelevant limerick which appears on the front page:

"There was a young lady of Sheen,
 Whose Musical Sense was not keen,
 She said 'It is odd
 That I cannot tell 'God
 Save the Weazel' from 'Pop goes the Queen.'"

Follows an interesting analysis of the six types of reaction to music exhibited by new boys, chapters on the value of the singing, musical enterprise and Musical Clubs, the technique of concerts, the cultivation of good taste: and an appendix, with some very well done programme notes which might serve as models of their kind.

Dr. Wood is fully alive to the value and use of the gramophone and the gramophone recital. If I may say so without offence the executives of gramophone societies might profit exceedingly from a close perusal of this treatise.

N. P.

ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG. By Egan Wellesz, translated from the German by W. H. Kerridge, M.A., Mus.Bac., Cantab. (Dent, 6/-)

This book will have an obvious interest for members of the N.G.S.; particularly those who are finding Schönberg's string sextet, *Verklärte Nacht*, none too easy of appreciation. It is written

with fine enthusiasm, which loses nothing in Mr. Kerridge's translation.

Most of us know the composer in performance only through the sextet alluded to above, the five orchestral pieces, the *Pierrot Lunaire song cycle*, and, perhaps, some of the songs. These works are hardly sufficient for a just estimate of Schönberg's powers, which, it seems to the writer, are most conspicuously displayed in the *Gurre Lieder*, a work calling for enormous forces and full of great beauty, and the overture *Pelleas und Melisande*. Schönberg's creative activity falls into three periods. To quote the author, "in the first (1897-1904) he carries the melodic-harmonic development of the romantic school to its utmost points. (This period includes the sextet, *Gurre Lieder*, and *Pelleas und Melisande*.) In the second (1905-1914) he turns towards the classical forms. (First string quartet, *Pierrot Lunaire*.) In the third period (1920) we find Schönberg bringing order to the newly-won tone-material and establishing new rules for it. Schönberg is for ever seeking, for ever changing. Rest for him is stagnation."

It is the second and the third periods that are so difficult to assimilate. The taunts of super-intellectuality, of formal coldness are often hurled at the composer in regard to the music contained in these periods. I am bound to say I prefer the cloak of romanticism that Schönberg wore so beautifully in the *Gurre Lieder* to the curious musical clothes he now stands revealed in.

It is really exciting to read, for instance, Wellesz' description of the opera *Der Glückliche Hand*. Here is some strikingly new and original thing. But the musical extracts given damp down this enthusiasm. The muddiness of the harmony, the angularity of the vocal writing are disconcerting. Further, when we read that "in his new works Schönberg can say in one single figure what formerly required several bars to express; and simultaneous sounds, a chord for example, may often be a substitute for a succession of notes in a melodic phrase," we begin to wonder. May? but how does this work in actual practice?

There is no real parallel in other arts. But you cannot compress thoughts in a play by making all the characters speak at once. Nor can they ejaculate, except for a particular dramatic effect, a succession of single words. In a fluid art like music you cannot compress, eliminate, or leave to the imagination as in other arts; if only because the musical material depends for coherence on logical development. Is not the result of Schönberg's theory just the angularity and muddiness of which I spoke?

We must wait for a performance of the third period works and go to hear them in a spirit of real humility; anxious to learn and appreciate where possible. Here, at any rate, is the stature of a man. Unceasingly attacked with the petty hostility meted out to men of ideas he has gone quietly on his way; a fine teacher and a stalwart friend—read his tribute to Mahler—a composer of deep sincerity and profound originality.

N. P.

Miscellaneous Reviews

- H.M.V.—C.1191 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Mayfair Orchestra: No, No, Nanette Selection (Vincent Youmans).
- H.M.V.—B.1971 (10in., 3s.).—Helen Clark (soprano) and Lewis James (tenor): Tea for Two and I want to be happy from No, No, Nanette.
- H.M.V.—C.1193 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Mayfair Orchestra: Katja the Dancer Selection (Jean Gilbert).
- H.M.V.—B.1983 (10in., 3s.).—Salon Orchestra: Enchanted Forest (Spitalny) and A Japanese Sunset (Deppen).
- VOCALION.—X.9539 (10in., 3s.).—Melville Gideon: All Alone (Berlin) and Loving the Wrong Girl (Gideon).
- VOCALION.—X.9540 (10in., 3s.).—Melville Gideon: They catch 'em young (Gideon, and I wonder what's become of Sally? (Ager).
- VOCALION.—X.9541 (10in., 3s.).—Melville Gideon: I love you so (Gideon) and Prehistoric Maid (Gideon).
- VOCALION.—X.9552 (10in., 3s.).—The Revue Orchestra: Katja Selection (Gilbert, arr. Wood).
- VOCALION.—X.9544 (10in., 3s.).—Alfred Cammeyer (banjo): Dance Bizarre and Marche en Passant (Cammeyer).
- ZONOPHONE.—A.291 (12in., 4s.).—Max Darewski (piano): Waltz in A flat, Op 34 (Chopin) and Invitation à la Valse Op. 65 (Weber).
- ZONOPHONE.—A.290 (12in., 4s.).—Royal Cremona Orchestra: Casse-Noisette Suite (Tchaikovsky).
- COLUMBIA.—9033 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—London Theatre Orchestra: The Dollar Princess Selection (Leo Fall).
- COLUMBIA.—9034 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—London Theatre Orchestra: Patricia Selection (Geoffrey Gwyther).
- COLUMBIA.—3608 (10in., 3s.).—J. H. Squire Instrumental Octet: The Butterfly (Bendix) and The Grasshopper's Dance (Bucalossi).
- COLUMBIA.—3610 (10in., 3s.).—T. C. Sterndale-Bennett (entertainer): Sweetheart Mine and I don' wanna go back to Dixie.
- COLUMBIA.—3623 (10in., 3s.).—Layton and Johnstone (American duettists): Don't put the blame on me and All Alone.
- COLUMBIA.—3624 (10in., 3s.).—Layton and Johnstone: Who? and Any way the Wind blows.
- COLUMBIA.—3637 (10in., 3s.).—Layton and Johnstone: Listening and Everybody loves my baby.
- COLUMBIA.—3560 (10in., 3s.).—Tom Clare (at the piano): You made such a fool of me and Colds.
- KATJA THE DANCER:—**
- COLUMBIA.—9035 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Gaiety Theatre Orchestra: Selection.
- COLUMBIA.—3625 (10in., 3s.).—Thro' Life we go dancing together and Just for a Night.
- COLUMBIA.—3626 (10in., 3s.).—When we are married and I've planned a Rendezvous.
- COLUMBIA.—3627 (10in., 3s.).—If you cared and Those eyes so tender.
- COLUMBIA.—3628 (10in., 3s.).—Leander and Love and Duty.
- Singers:—Lilian Davies, Ivy Tresmand, Rene Mallory, Gregory Stroud, Gene Gerrard, Bobbie Comber.
- NO, NO, NANETTE:—**
- COLUMBIA.—9036 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Palace Theatre Orchestra: Selection.
- COLUMBIA.—3629 (10in., 3s.).—You can dance with any girl at all and Take a little one-step.
- COLUMBIA.—3630 (10in., 3s.).—I want to be happy and Tea for Two.
- COLUMBIA.—3631 (10in., 3s.).—Too many Rings around Rosie and Where has my Hubby gone, Blues.

COLUMBIA.—3632 (10in., 3s.).—No, No, Nanette and I've confessed to the Breeze.

Singers:—Binnie Hale, Irene Browne, George Grossmith, Seymour Beard, and Joseph Coyne.

The Mayfair Orchestra has been very active, and the selections from *No, No, Nanette* and *Katja the Dancer* are very good, as well as being topical. The Salon Orchestra plays with great ability two tuneful trifles which suit its American public better than ours.

The announcement of a "Melville Gideon Special Series" is to me, another proof of the new vitality of the Vocalion Company. I have an amiable weakness for Melville Gideon records; it is a weakness, and surely it is amiable? Since Margaret Cooper there has been no one who could "put across" songs of a debased sentimentality with such disarming intimacy. Listen to him in *All Alone* or *Loving the wrong girl* or *I wonder what's become of Sally?* or *I love you so*. What is it? His exquisite touch on the piano, his caressing wraith of a voice, his clear and sensuous diction, the thought of his Pierrot costume and perennial youth? Something of all of these—and something more. I think it is that in taking us completely into his confidence he admits that he doesn't take it seriously himself. "Here's rather a jolly little thing," he says—and sits down and sings it with all the charm of which he is capable. What one resents in some singers is that they either take their rubbishy songs with complete seriousness or are too exigent of the listener's "amiable weakness."

The *Katja Selection* on a 10in. is good enough for those who think 4s. 6d. too much to pay for a musical comedy selection; and the skill of Mr. Cammeyer on the banjo is remarkable. Fine recording too.

Max Darewski is as adroit as ever with Chopin and Weber, and I am glad to add this record to my collection; but I can't help hoping that he will give us his interpretation of some of the new fox-trots before long. It is in them that he is supreme.

The *Casse-Noisette* record consists of the *Overture Miniature*, the *Marche*, the *Danse de la Fée Dragée*, the *Danse chinoise*, and the *Danse russe*; so it is full of jolly tunes. But somehow the playing is not up to the high standard set lately by the Capitol Grand Orchestra on Brunswick.

The Columbia issues in this list are quite up to standard, and may be strongly recommended to anyone who wants to get those particular titles. *The Dollar Princess* and *Patricia* both make good selections, especially the former; but, of course, I do not urge them on the notice of people who have not seen the original musical comedies. The J. H. Squire Instrumental Octet is not for my personal taste this month, and I don't much like the combination of instruments, which is probably my fault. But does the celeste really make a good recording instrument (I hope it is a celeste)? Mr. Sterndale-Bennett is remarkably clear, and so is Mr. Tom Clare; all rather foolish songs, except *You made such a fool of me*, which is witty as well. Layton and Johnstone have not, of course, anything like such a good diction, but their easy, mellifluous style is very attractive, as always, and *Don't put the blame on me*, with a banjulele accompaniment, is exceptionally charming.

It is rather a relief to me to think that no words of mine can affect the sale of *No, No, Nanette* and *Katja the Dancer* records. The enterprise of Columbia in securing the exclusive services of the original performers to record their songs is lauded on all sides, and the records are said to have beaten all other records in fabulous popularity. Either you have already bought them before you read these lines, or you have very little intention of spending money on musical comedy. Records of this kind are generally made in a hurry, often by singers new to the recording room, and all that one can reasonably demand of them is topicality; so that if I call all those specimens adequate I hope I am doing them justice. But for me the bubble of *No, No, Nanette* is burst. I rushed off to see it and found it a perfectly ordinary performance on hackneyed lines, held together by Joseph Coyne and George Grossmith (who make the best of the records, too, by the way); and to see these two idols of my youth gallantly setting the pace was like watching the match between Shaun Spadah and Music Hall. Only that there are eight performances a week at the Palace Theatre. *Katja the Dancer* I have not yet seen, but judging from the records I am not going to enjoy it very much.

On the whole I like the Selections the best whether on H.M.V. or Columbia. I prefer the Columbia versions of *Tea for Two* and *I want to be happy* (and Layton and Johnstone best of the three versions); and of the rest recommend especially Col. 3629, 3632, 3625, and perhaps 3628.

PEPPERING.



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New Records for May

ZONOPHONE SUPPLEMENT No. 5, 1925

10-inch Double Sided, 2/6

2550	{ Slavonic Rhapsody	Horwich R.M.I. Band
	{ Libella Overture	
2551	{ Your Smile	Browning Mummery
	{ Croon a tune	
2552	{ The 31st of April	Foster Richardson
	{ Bells of Cadiz	
2553	{ After the Storm	Arthur Cox
	{ Let it rain	
2554	{ Follow the Swallow	Leonard Hubbard
	{ Driftwood	
2556	{ Eat More Fruit	Clarkson Rose
	{ They never have a "cross-word" now	
	{ Les Cloches du Monastere—Nocturne (L. Wely)	
2556	{ Wanda—Mazurka de Salon, Op. 88 (C. Bohm)	Max Darewski
	{ (Piano Solo)	
2557	{ La Mascotte—Selection	The Accordeon Ensemble
	{ Parts 1 and 2 (Audran)	
2558	{ After the Storm—Fox-Trot	
	{ On the ZR 3—Fox-Trot	Arcadians Dance Orchestra
2559	{ Doo Wacka doo—Fox-Trot	
	{ Has anyone seen my Pom ?—Fox-Trot	
	{ Oh ! how I love my	
	{ darling—Fox-Trot	
2560	{ I don't want to get	
	{ married—Fox-Trot	
	{ Jealous—Fox-Trot	
2561	{ I've got a feeling for	
	{ Ophelia—Fox-Trot	
	{ Max Darewski's Dance Band	

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CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Fritih Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

THE JOTA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—My letter of last month was not intended to detract in any way from Mr. Sydney Grew's valuable articles on Spanish music, and I incidentally congratulate THE GRAMOPHONE on having produced a paper which is both popular and interesting. I entirely agree with Mr. Grew's Spanish correspondent. I discussed the subject with de Falla some years ago when in Madrid just after the production of *The Three-Cornered Hat* in Paris. He said that native music should only be the inspiration of art music, to which, no doubt, all musicians will agree. The result of this is that the better the music is as art music the less a knowledge of the native forms will help towards a correct interpretation of it—though I may say that certain passages in the Albeniz Spanish suite which are difficult on the piano come "under the hand," as they say in Spain, on the guitar. I must add one more record to my list of last month, this time an Alegria, a pure Flamenco dance. No. A.E.66, H.M.V. Spanish catalogue. This record is unique, as it really successfully reproduces all the sounds produced in Flamenco dancing. The rasgueado on the guitar, the sung copla, the various "falsetas" or variations on the guitar solo, the clapping of hands, the tapping of the dancer's heels and the clipping of her fingers are all perfectly audible as the record goes through the dance until the voice takes up the copla once more at the end. The vocal part is very oriental, but not so much so as in other Flamenco music. There is no other Spanish folk-dance record to approach this, and it tells more of the true feeling of the Andalusian gypsy music than anything words can express.

It is a debased species of this dancing that the novelist is thinking of. As a matter of fact, the jota is as foreign to Southern Spain as is the music of the bagpipes to England, exactly; both are imported, are the type music of another race, and should be performed by natives, though the jota is an easy dance for a professional Spanish dancer to learn. At the moment the jota is being excellently done at the Coliseum in *The Spanish Shawl*, and anyone sufficiently interested in the subject to go and see it will find it well worth while. They will immediately see that it is the exact opposite of the sensual dance described by Hergesheimer, and that neither in idea nor in the costume worn, which is the only one ever used in any kind of Aragonese jota, is there any resemblance to what he describes. In the "Fete at Valencia" a Jota Valenciana is danced by Maria Manzanara, though not mentioned in the programme, and again a simple peasant's fete day costume is used, as is correct, but this performance loses much interest as the dance should be performed by several couples of men and women, the male dancer taking a very important part, as in the Jota Aragonesa. The "Farruea" the "Danse Gitane," and the "Andalusian dance," of Maria Manzanara again are very beautiful, are all based on Flamenco dancing, and are the type of dance the novelist describes, minus certain music hall additions, in the way of hat and half-closed eyes, etc., which are too tempting for the pen of a ready writer or for some music hall dancers to avoid, it may be said in justice to the novelist.

Watford.

Yours faithfully,

WYNDHAM TRYON.

[Let us add a word of thanks to the Direction of the Coliseum, which at our suggestion invited Mr. Tryon to see the performance of *Women and Flowers of Spain*.—ED.]

HEMPEL AND GALLI-CURCI.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—At the risk of being accused of re-opening the Galli-Curci-Hempel controversy, I should like to draw attention to the last sentence of Mr. J. A. Pierson's letter in your March issue. Mr. Pierson says: "In view of the fact that Galli-Curci sang such

monstrosities as *Just a song at twilight* and *If no one ever marries me*, one cannot regard her as a really great artist." Is not this a little sweeping? If we are to deny the claim to the title "great artist" of any performer who makes an occasional excursion into sentimental rubbish of this kind, we shall find that many of the accepted Olympians of the musical world will have to go by the board. Firstly, we shall be compelled to discard the much lauded Hempel for singing *Dixie*, even though we denied, thereby, the undoubtedly great qualities of her Schubert singing. McCormack will have to go, for he has made records of such banal inanities as *Dear old pal of mine* and *Marcheta* and other songs of a like kidney. Yet we could ill afford to lose his renderings of classical Italian aria and modern songs by Hugo Wolf and others. Evan Williams must be rejected for *A perfect day*, Caruso for that dreadful song *Parted*, Melba for *Home, Sweet Home*, Clara Butt for songs too numerous to mention, Schumann-Heink for *The Rosary*, Marguerite D'Alvarez for *Homage*, and even Kreisler for *The Love Nest* and *Beautiful Ohio*. One cannot deny that many of these are great artists, however much one may deprecate their momentary artistic lapses. In glancing casually through the lists of the leading record-manufacturing companies, one is amazed at the very large number of singers, and also instrumentalists, who stoop, on occasion, very much lower than they ought. Surely we cannot on that account deny them any claim to greatness at all. An artist is entitled to be judged on his best work, rather than on his worst. He should certainly be told when he is lowering himself, but not condemned as second-rate, on two songs out of a programme of twenty. Personally I forgive Galli-Curci the infliction of the two offending items for her exquisite artistry, in the two old Italian airs with which she opened her programme, *Deh, più a me non v'ascondete*, by Bononcini, and *Se tu m'ami*, by Pergolesi. Could she not be persuaded to record these?

Nottingham.

Yours truly,

CEDRIC WALLIS.

[By arrangement with Mr. Rainford and our critic "J." the "Cease Fire" is now sounded, though both are quite willing to enlist further recruits and to prolong the warfare into Volume III. Mr. Rainford had the last shot; he wrote: "the difference between 'J.' and myself is that I am a music-lover and 'J.' a music-worshipper. Idolatry of that kind does not appeal to me." May we also thank those who have written very much to the point—especially B. M. Dickinson, of Sheffield, and J. C., of Clapham Park—but whose views are not printed for lack of space.—ED.]

THE ELECTROPHONE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—It may interest readers of your paper who are fond of music in the home to know that those who are comfortably off, and are on the telephone, can have an attachment to it whereby they can be connected to certain places of entertainment, and of worship, in London. Any telephone subscriber in the London area is eligible. All tastes of music are represented, and there is a fair amount of choice. There are a dozen churches, and approximately a dozen theatres that you can be connected to, besides one or two music halls. Operas and oratorios occur from time to time and a number of musical productions in theatres can be heard in this way. For those who are invalids, this is ideal, because there is no trouble whatsoever involved, and everything is looked after for them. There is virtually nothing to go out of order, and opportunity is given to change from one place to the other as often as the user likes. The apparatus takes up very little space indeed, and can be fixed in a few hours. The installation is rented yearly, so that should anyone get tired of it, all that is necessary is to drop the rent.

Those who would like to know more about it are invited to send me a stamped addressed envelope.

33, St. Augustine's Avenue,
Croydon.Yours faithfully,
C. RODERICK STUART.

[A curious situation appears to have developed, indirectly owing to wireless. Whereas previously the necessarily select body of electrophone users had no wish to add to their number, now there are a good many vacancies. We print Mr. Roderick Stuart's letter merely because there may be among our readers or their friends in London some bed-ridden people to whom the electrophone would give more satisfaction than either the gramophone or the wireless can give. The electrophonists have been so close a body in the past that most of us were unconscious of the survival of this, the earliest method of bringing music (or sermons) to the sick-bed.—ED.]

THE NATIONAL GRAMOPHONIC SOCIETY.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am greatly obliged by the receipt of the N.G.S. second quarterly issue of records, safely to hand last week-end. They seem to me even better than the first issue, and the Schönberg *Sextet* in particular strikes me as an exceptional achievement (that may well be a landmark in the history of recorded music) as well as an enchantingly beautiful and desirable piece of music. I trust it will receive sufficient welcome from my fellow-members to encourage the Society to go on to do Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* or one of his quartets. I feel the Society ought also to be congratulated on discovering an English quartet at last that can stand up to the Flonzaley or the Lener—and give points to the latter, at least, in playing for recording. There is a delicate perfection and sense of style about this quartet that gives it a distinctive and most admirable quality of its own. It may be a fanciful thing to say, but it seems to me also that these records are of a finer quality in performance than any records on public sale—as if playing for a particularised audience has a better psychological effect on the performers than playing for the trade has.

But there seems a chance that the N.G.S. is going to make itself unnecessary (in its present scope at any rate) by its activities. Since it began work the recording companies have so quickly accepted its implications that the works it proposes to issue would stand just as much chance by now of being issued by the trade if its activities were to cease to-morrow. In these circumstances I should like to suggest that the scope of the Society might be enlarged, and its attention directed to works off the beaten track and for combinations not likely to commend themselves so obviously to the companies. There is some scope in this direction, without absolutely leaving the world of chamber music—from such neglected works of undoubted genius as Verdi's *String Quartet* and Strauss' *Piano Quartet* to Bach's cantatas for one (or a few) voices and instruments, such small choral works as Debussy's *Blessed Damozel* and Rutland Boughton's *Sir Galahad*, *A Christmas Mystery* for voice and string quartet; works by Brahms for clarinet and voice, and such out-of-the-way things as Beethoven's sonata for horn and piano—things that every music-lover longs to hear and that very few rarely have a chance to.

With many thanks for the records,

Silverdale.

I am, yours faithfully,

GORDON BOTTOMLEY.

CORTOT.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I want to protest against the severe criticism of Alfred Cortot's playing in Schumann's *A minor Piano Concerto* (H.M.V.). How anyone listening to his interpretation of the exquisite First Movement can say he lacks "sympathy and understanding," or, again, that he "is like Milton, cold, hard, and Puritanical," I cannot conceive. His delicacy of touch is extraordinary, and I fail entirely to find any want of soul throughout the whole concerto. It is true Cortot's style is thoroughly French, which always in music, as in the French language itself, has a gay and light crispness; if we want breadth and sonority we must go to the great German players of the piano. Though this concerto of Schumann's is a thoroughly masculine sort of work, it is extraordinarily gay and light, with just enough passion in it and force to avoid that machinelike tendency in all piano music.

Schumann was brought up a lawyer, and there is nothing luscious or sentimental about him, and in my humble opinion Cortot has interpreted his music correctly. I have not heard the Frenchman play Beethoven, and it is possible he might fail with that master's more tragic work. However, as Cortot was chosen to conduct Wagner's *Ring* at Bayreuth, the Germans must have considered him capable of properly understanding German music; and therefore he may not be quite such a "dud" as THE GRAMOPHONE critics contend.

Lincoln.

Yours truly,

E. M. BICKNELL.

SOUND-BOX MATTERS, ETC.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I should like to reply to Mr. Little's comments, in the February number, on my letter in the January number. He considers aluminium an inferior substance for diaphragms and less sensitive than mica. He also thinks that because I found alteration of the tension of my sound-box did not affect reproduction (provided, of course, the parts were not so loose as to cause

rattling), it is not a very sensitive one. With regard to the diaphragms, I would undertake to deceive him and get him to say either that there was no difference or that the aluminium was better! I do not say aluminium is as suitable as mica under all conditions—e.g., extreme heat, and it is liable to slight oxidation, but mica has also defects. Its structure of easily separable laminations (which may cause vibration), liability to flake, crack, and blister, are against it. In my prolonged tests I have used several best quality micas and my aim has been to find out which diaphragm got the most out of a record—especially in brilliant orchestral effects—without yielding excessive surface noise. I find a non-corrugated aluminium diaphragm the best. My sound-box has flat springs and a 2-inch diaphragm. I dislike a dull reproduction as much as anyone, and in making aluminium diaphragms have used mica as a standard to be equalled or surpassed. Mr. Little says: "Aluminium is capable of lying like Ananias," because he thinks it does not show up defects like mica. Provided the aluminium is of correct thickness and quality, I dispute that statement. Has he ever tested a corrugated aluminium diaphragm? This is the most sensitive I know, being so extremely thin that the corrugations are necessary for stiffening. The only objection to this is that it yields too much scratch. A number of high-grade sound-boxes (e.g., Lenthall) are now being fitted with these diaphragms. As to Mr. Little's remark about tensioning, as he probably knows, there are several excellent boxes (e.g., Sonat) which have no tension springs, the necessary "spring" being in the diaphragm itself. I think a loosely-tensioned box approximates to this, the springs just holding the stylus-bar in position. Perhaps Mr. Little thinks I have not a sensitive or critical ear, but I can assure him I have; otherwise I should not have taken so much trouble to get the best possible results from my gramophone, which is not of the aristocratic type.

With reference to the Editor's note to my letter, "Facts about Needles" in the March number, I think it can be taken for granted that a point which is right for a Zonophone (or H.M.V.) record is suitable for any needle-cut record sold in England. I do not know any smaller groove, and it has been laid down that the needle should ride on the bottom of the groove free from the sides, so this point is quite suitable for a slightly larger groove. As regards wear of the point, I should have said that my machine has a very light tone-arm and a sound-box weighing only 3½ ounces, so the wear I mentioned is about the minimum possible. I may say that this lack of weight on the record does not result in rattle or blast even on the most powerful records, such as *Le Chasseur Maudit* (Columbia) which I have just got on the recommendation of Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Goodbody, to whom my thanks. Thanking you for the very interesting March number,

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

Croydon.

G. L. JOHNSTONE.

CYLINDER RECORDING.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Some three months ago I addressed you on the subject of cylinder recording. I have received no reply, nor has my letter been published in the columns of your paper. From this I infer that I have erred in writing on two sides of the paper (though I cannot recollect doing so) and the case, therefore, clearly calls for a repetition of the subject-matter of my letter.

Your correspondent, Mr. C. Balmain, in regretting the eclipse of the old cylinder record, opens up a wide and interesting field of discussion. He writes of Kodak records which may be folded up and placed in the vest pocket. Surely we need entertain no such fantastic development. A cylinder 8 inches in diameter, revolved at 60 revs. per minute would give ample momentum to record and reproduce notes of very high frequency. Such a linear speed would correspond to that of a disc revolving at 80, with the needle playing at 3 inches radius. Loss of pitch is not discernible in good soprano records at this speed, and harmonies are reproduced very well. An 8in. cylinder 12 inches in length would provide twenty minutes of music, a very intriguing prospect, and one under which symphonies and the other larger compositions would be very acceptable. So far, so good. Practical people alone rail at Utopia, and they are the ones to be considered here. Will Mr. Balmain please say whether cylinder recording could be made commercially attractive? I understand that such records are produced by playing the matrix over for each separate one, whilst discs are stamped from the matrix. Under such conditions it is reasonable to concede that a loss would occur after several copies have been taken, and there is also the hazard that all copies would not be

equally faithful to the original, since the reproducing process is mechanically intricate.

Then there is the purely commercial viewpoint. Would cylinders cost more to produce than discs? If so, the prospect of a return to them seems remote. Failing cylinders, the "World" system might be susceptible of perfection, say by means of a delicately adjustable governor or series of governors, controlled from the tone-arm. Till the inventor is sighted, may we hope for an article on this very interesting subject by one of your informed contributors, say Mr. Balmain?

Johannesburg.

Yours faithfully,

WM. MATTHEYS.

[Mr. Balmain's comment is as follows: "Your correspondent has, I am afraid, misunderstood my references to folding cylinders; there is nothing fantastic in the idea as set forth in my letter on the subject, it has the backing of one who may be said to be the father of the trade—Mr. Seymour. Mr. Seymour has assured me that the folding cylinder is a practical proposition and could be made to-day were the capital forthcoming. There's the rub. Whilst present-day companies have hundreds of thousands locked up in disc matrices, we seekers after perfection need expect little help from that quarter. The provision of the plant necessary to make the folding cylinder a commercial success would entail very heavy expenditure on any new company formed to exploit the idea, and therefore as matters are we can regard the folding cylinder as an ideal towards which the next generation may work. To come to details, the folding cylinder would necessitate the scrapping of all machines of the present type as they would require the provision of a geared roller in place of the revolving table. The ordinary tone-arm could not be utilised as the movement of the sound-box would have to be along a straight line as in the original phonograph. This again would necessitate the use of gears, which are not satisfactory, unless the sound-box were carried on rails or floats as in my patent machine, which, so far as I can see at present, is the only machine which would satisfactorily fulfil the necessary requirements of the cylinder reproduction of needle-cut records. As the principal trade concern has definitely decided against the production of my method of obtaining correct needle tracking, I fear there is little hope of the introduction of a machine which would require not only correct tracking, but a complete scrapping of present methods of recording.]

Mr. Mattheys may be assured that when cylinder recording does come into its own again in the new form it will not necessitate the laborious copying suggested in his letter. The duplicates will be made in thin celluloid, endless film form, from a cylindrical matrix of some 3½ inches diameter, and they will be boxed on rollers of approximately the same dimensions as present-day pianola records. They will contain sufficient surface area to give us the whole of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* or any other masterpiece without a break and without that horrible flattening of tone which mars the disc system of recording. Until that happy day arrives we shall have to make shift with improved World controllers or similar devices, if we want to obviate the arbitrary breaks now necessary.

We may pray that the new Vocalion record and controller may prove more than mere makeshifts."—C. B., Ashted.]

FATHER GREEN'S OPERA CLUB.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I see that you have published an article by Mr. Isidore de Lara referring to his National Opera scheme, and in which he comments upon the enthusiasm of the members of an "Opera Club" I have formed here in Battersea. This sudden glare of publicity rather overwhelms us; but if it is going to help Mr. de Lara to make his scheme a success and also disperse from doubting minds the idea that the average Englishman has no ear for music and hence for the opera, then we shall have done good work.

I believe the love of music can be cultivated, and if it is true that the majority of the people of our country have little musical taste, I submit it has been the absence of musical education that has caused this lack of appreciation. Those of us who love the art surely have but one clear duty and that is to arouse, to develop, the musical sense in others. To-day we have the material at our hand. I work in a district which is desperately poor, and, like many another, I love those who lack much of this world's goods, because I know to what great heights they can soar and how they are able to appreciate the beautiful in a deeper and truer sense, perhaps, than any other class of the community.

Eighteen months ago I decided that after Evensong every Sunday some twenty young people, all over sixteen years, should come to my study, where I have a good gramophone, and that we would "go through" the story and music of some opera. At first music bored; in fact, Wagner was a noise; but to-day they know the *Ring* by heart, and live for the day when we shall have our National Opera House. There are now over thirty members in the club, and we could have many more but for lack of room. All members place something—a few cannot afford to do even that—in the "record box," and by this means they feel they have a share in the concern. We have thus been able to buy overtures and several songs from each opera; but, of course, we have had to be content with something cheaper than H.M.V. double-sided celebrities.

I wonder if there are any other priests who read your splendid publication? Could they not do what we have done and are doing in Battersea? What a great opportunity there is for teachers to get their children around them and to implant in them the germ for music, as does Mr. Jones, the headmaster of Tennyson Street School here in Battersea!

The "people" are yearning to-day to know and experience the beautiful, and therefore is it not our duty to help them and also to back up Mr. de Lara, so that we may have an opera house to which the people may go because the price of the seats is in line with their purses? Happy the day when the poor may sit at the feet of the greatest singers of the world as well as our more fortunate friends in Mayfair.

Yours very truly,

41, Sisters Avenue, S.W. 11.

R. H. GREEN.

CLAVICHORD RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Would it be possible to get one of the recording companies (Columbia would be my choice) to record some clavichord music? I have a cutting from the *Daily News*, some time last year, of a report of a visit to the workshop of Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch, at Haslemere, in Surrey, who makes these and similar instruments. Talking of Mr. Dolmetsch's playing on a clavichord it says: "On this marvellous instrument he can reproduce the sob of the violin, the tremolo of the human voice, the exquisite balance of the string quartet, the deep note of the bassoon, and the clear tone of horns. 'It is beside the point to talk of pianos,' he said to me, after playing a Bach fugue. 'On a piano you simply cannot do these things.'"

As Bach's fugues were written for a clavichord, what better instrument to have them played on, to add to the chamber music records available?

Lincoln.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. PAGE.

SHAKESPEARE'S SONGS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Those of your readers who were interested in Mr. N. O. M. Cameron's article in your March number on "Shakespeare's Songs" may like to know that in the American H.M.V. catalogue is a comprehensive set of records comprising musical settings of Shakespeare's text and incidental musical to the plays and, I may say, these are listed as Mr. Cameron very properly suggests that our recording companies should do—i.e., under the heading Shakespeare 1564–1616.

The following out of Mr. Cameron's "desiderata" appear in the list:—From *AS YOU LIKE IT*: *Under the greenwood tree* (Arne); *MERCHANT OF VENICE*: *Tell me where is fancy bred* (Stevens); *OTHELLO*: *Oh willow, willow* (traditional); *TWELFTH NIGHT*: *When that I was a little tiny boy*. From *THE TEMPEST*: *Come unto these yellow sands* (Purcell); *Full Fathom Five* and *Where the bee sucks* (Johnson). And the list further includes:—*AS YOU LIKE IT*: *What shall he have who killed the deer* (Bishop); *Blow, blow, thou winter wind* (Stevens); *It was a lover and his lass* (Morley). This last is a tenor and baritone duet unaccompanied. From *HAMLET*: traditional songs of Ophelia; *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*: *Take, oh take those lips away* (traditional); *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*: *You spotted snakes* (Mendelssohn); *TWELFTH NIGHT*: *Hold thy peace, thou knave* (old catch); *TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*: *Who is Sylvia?* (Schubert). The latter is sung by Reinald Werrenrath with harp accompaniment.

Yours faithfully,

Crews.

J. F. STUBBS.

NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment, question, or answer should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frieth Street, W.1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given, for reference.]

A Misprint.—In Note 248, "Centring by Angle-pieces" (p. 451), the word "changed" in l. 7 should be "clamped."

(272) **"The Starlight Express."**—I think the attention of THE GRAMOPHONE readers should be directed to the H.M.V. records of Charles Mott singing the delightful "Organ Grinder's Songs" in this opera of Elgar's with words by Algernon Blackwood. They are: "My old tunes"; "To the children"; "The Blue-Eyes Fairy" (D.455, 456). I heard Mr. Mott sing these at the Palladium, and he took the part in the opera. He had a quaint whimsicality and pleasing voice hard to describe. The records which I got soon afterwards scarcely did full justice to either Mott or the orchestra as I heard it at the Palladium. Alas, he was killed in France and we must be grateful to the wonderful invention which can preserve for us a dead man's voice. The records appeal to women hearers, especially "The Blue Eyes Fairy," which has a delicate waltz rhythm. I need hardly add that the melody of the verses does not repeat as in ordinary songs. I have not seen the opera—or is it a play—why is it not revived from time to time?—H. E. A., Braintree.

(273) **The H.M.V. Catalogue.**—I don't know, however, that anything in THE GRAMOPHONE since the first number has more completely won my concurrence and approval than the short note (p. 365) on the "H.M.V. Catalogue for 1925." I will not try to express all the admiration I feel for this catalogue for fear of seeming to exaggerate. It is an able and a blessed work, and occupies an honoured place among my possessions. Catalogue-making, like dictionary-making, is work that gets little thanks however well done. I am rather given to the perusal of catalogues (of books, plants, etc.) and H.M.V. can hold its own with any of them, for method, system of classification, facility of reference instructiveness and the various other virtues which all catalogues ought to possess and so many lack. When my ear gets wearied with musical sounds I can take up "H.M.V. Catalogue" and peruse it with the interest I should find in a history of music, which, strictly speaking, it really is. My compliments and thanks to the compiler or compilers, to whom I tender the consolation, which, though trite, is true, that good work, however inadequately recognised, is nevertheless its own reward.—A. W., Nairn.

(274) **The B minor Mass.**—After hearing the very fine performance of Bach's "Mass in B minor" by the combined Bristol and Newport Choral Societies, with Carrie Tubbs, Margaret Balfour, John Adams, Robert Radford as soloists, I am convinced that some of its numbers should be recorded for the gramophone. I would particularly recommend the striking bass solo "Et in Spiritum Sanctum Domini" (No. 18), and also the beautiful duet for soprano and contralto, "Et in unum Dominum" (No. 14). Of the choruses, undoubtedly the "Sanctus" (No. 20) and the "Crucifixus" (No. 16), and perhaps the "Kyrie Eleison" (No. 1), also the "Hosanna" (No. 21). This great work brings out very well the German and Italian schools of music, and is therefore, besides being a fine piece of music, of great educational value. It seems pathetic when one realises that Bach never heard the work in its entirety, and his labour of love only gained for him the reputation of a brilliant organist. It was only a hundred years ago when Mendelssohn brought before the eyes of the public the works of this supreme composer.—"Prelude and Fugue," Clifton.

(275) **From South Africa.**—Were it not for THE GRAMOPHONE one would not know what any of the various companies beyond H.M.V. and Columbia were doing. To this magazine I owe especial thanks for introducing me to Gerhardt, Onegin, Nicolai Nadejin, and others; also for the valuable notes on such works as the "C sharp minor quartet." It may interest you to know that I find the South African made "Melophone" better than any of the imported gramophones, except the Edison Diamond Disc and the German Resonophone. It is also much cheaper and has a phenomenally long and silent running (and winding) power. With a Jewel Nom-y-ka sound-box I find it better than anything I have tried. I generally use Seymour Scratchless, Clifphone Duplex, Edison Sympathetic, or doped fibres when I do not require volume; with any of these and the above combination there is

no scratch at all if the record be well "glissolined." For piano and orchestra I use an Edison Chromic set in deep or a Trumpeter, and obtain immense volume coupled with clear definition. For medium volume I find the Clifphone Arrow and the H.M.V. and Columbia needles very good. I set the Jewel sound-box at a 45 degree angle, while with the adaptor supplied the track alignment seems very good.—R. N. W., Pretoria.

(276) **Farthest South.**—The monthly arrival of your invaluable paper is eagerly looked forward to in the most southerly city of the world, Invercargill, New Zealand. It has saved me quite a few pounds a year and I think the subscription as it now stands a fair thing, although some people in your part of the world objected to the rise in price. In your December issue you mention the Jewel sound-box as the best for pianoforte records, or at least some experts who gave it a trial say so. Well I have had a Jewel on my machine for about a year now and I give it first place on all records. The reproduction with a fibre is the nearest to the original I could wish for. For string quartet records it cannot be beaten. I say this after trying six standard makes of speakers. Thanks to the enterprise of local dealers, who nearly all get THE GRAMOPHONE every month, we are kept well up to time with the monthly issues, the monthly bulletins being four months behind London, and H.M.V., Zono., Aco., Columbia, Regal, and Parlophone can all be bought here from our dealers.—P. M., Invercargill.

(277) **Male Quartets.**—May I ask some of your authorities to give us a review of the best records of unaccompanied male quartets?—E. H. W., Birmingham.

[An article on this subject, written by someone with comprehensive experience of the records available, would be valuable.—Ed.]

(278) **The Fan.**—My H.M.V. pleated diaphragm has become clogged with French chalk, as it has been used for dancing. The result is a very bad rattle. Can you suggest a way of removing the chalk which is lodged in the central part of the diaphragm without damaging it?—F. C. M., Capri.

[This is a poser. If it came from any less formidable address we should say, "On no account tamper with the centre of the diaphragm, but send it to the nearest H.M.V. dealer to forward to Hayes." But Capri has obvious disadvantages.—Ed.]

(279) **The Ring.**—The Gramophone Company having issued additional records to their "Ring" series, I feel more than ever the need of some such book as was announced in the October, 1923, number of THE GRAMOPHONE by your correspondent, Edgar F. Newton, as being ready for publication. Will Mr. Newton or yourself kindly tell us what became of the venture, and whether it is possible to get a copy of the book?—J. T., Manchester.

[Most unfortunately Mr. Newton's address has been mislaid. Perhaps if he reads this he will communicate with us. As to the "Ring" the booklets issued by the Gramophone Co. with the records and the librettos of the operas published by Messrs. Schott and Co. would supply the requirements of most enthusiasts.—Ed.]

(280) **Victor Records.**—I am glad to see that you print words of songs with advertisements on the back, as I cut out the translations and paste them in a book and follow the records. The Victor records which I buy here are infinitely better in the surface than H.M.V. They have no shots (small-pox, Mr. Mackenzie calls it) nor crackles. Not only that, but one can obtain records unobtainable on H.M.V.—many Caruso's for instance; also Gounod's "Ave Maria," Alda and Elman, better than Gluck and Zimbalist or Melba and Kubelik. Could you give an article on Battistini and his records?—T. G. F., Punta Arenas, Straits of Magellan.

(281) **The Magic Flute** (vide pp. 350, 396).—As the Queen of the Night why not have Evelyn Scotney? Surely Mr. Ellis of the B.N.O.C. is the very man for Papageno. Norman Allin, the finest English bass, would undoubtedly be the Sarastro, not Robert Radford. This cast seems as fine for the gramophone as one could possibly desire.—"Papageno" and "Papagena," Bristol.

(282) **The Eighth Symphony.**—Which is the better rendering of Beethoven's "Eighth Symphony"—the R.A.H. Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald or the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Nikisch?—J. T. C. K., Belfast.

(283) **Best Records Wanted.**—(a) "Gavotte in E" (Bach), (b) "Le Cygne," (c) "Chanson Triste," (d) "Miserere" from "Il Trovatore"—Caruso is far too noisy in the H.M.V. buff label record, (e) "Minuet in G" (Beethoven)—Elman plays it nicely, but the recording is faint, and (f) "Ave Maria" (Gounod).—W. J. K., High Wycombe.

(284) **Records Wanted.**—The best twelve baritone records, opera, oratorio, etc., but *not* popular ballads. Any language. —"Alma," Birmingham.

(285) **Home-made Horns.**—I did some experimenting a short time ago with a home-made thin cardboard internal horn. The result was not bad, but a trifle muffled. Would a much thicker cardboard horn, shellac varnished, give better results? Is it really worth going to any expense to get a satisfactory result? —D. W. C., Salisbury.

(286) **The Immortal Hour.**—I hope that many others besides myself of the thousands who heard and loved the "Immortal Hour" will support Mr. R. B. Wither's appeal for records of it. Could not Mr. William Heseltine, whose recording voice we know to be exquisite, give us Midir's two great songs, "In the days of the great fires" and "I am a song in the land of youth"? The Gramophone Company, whose skill in recording choruses is well-known might attempt the first act, with Mr. Radford as Dalua. The whole work is eminently suited for recording. The orchestration is delicate and yet clear, and there are no problems of climax or adjustment such as must have been met with in the Wagner or "Hassan" records. In any case, it would be a great pity if the only British opera which has achieved anything like a popular success were to receive no encouragement whatever from the recording companies.—J. F., Ayr.

(287) **Fibre Needles.**—Last evening, on my Sonora, I played twenty-one sides (vocal, instrumental, orchestral, and band) with one H.M.V. fibre needle without cutting, except that I shortened the needle by $\frac{1}{8}$ in. at the blunt end. The tone, volume, and detail were perfect to the last.—M. L., Norbiton.

(288) **Fibre Needles.**—With an *undoped* Hall fibre needle I have played the following, in the order mentioned, playing length of needle $\frac{1}{2}$ in., Exhibition sound-box, H.M.V. Table Grand 110: (1) Col. 3592, "In a little Rendezvous" and "I've got a feeling, etc."; (2) H.M.V. D.935, "Unfinished Symphony" (first side only); (3) H.M.V. D.588, "Waltz in G major"; (4) Voc. K.05024, "Grieg's Norwegian Dances" (both sides); (5) Parl. E.10117, "Lohengrin Prelude" (both sides). *Eight* sides and only on the last side did the needle show signs of packing up. Is this a record? —J. R. K., Manchester.

(289) **De Gogorza.**—I read with mild surprise Mr. Howarth's extraordinary remarks (April, p. 454) about De Gogorza: "... This singer does not seem satisfactory on any machine; a kink in the voice, it seems, and inclined to sound gramophony." Surely by this time it should have dawned on the majority of people that De Gogorza is a very great artist who sings superbly, blends wonderfully with other great singers, is completely immune from the language difficulty, and records well. Even people apt to snigger about cheese when his name is mentioned succumb to his artistry. I remember the pleasure and enthusiasm the following De Gogorza records evoked at the South London Society: "La Paloma" (D.B.186), "O Song Divine" (D.B.594), "Clang of the Forge" (D.A.178), "Deh vieni alla finestra" and "Devant la maison" (D.B.184), "Toreador Song" (D.B.625), and "A la luz de la luna" with Caruso (D.B.592). Though the particular record he referred to in his report may not have been so good as these, I do not think Mr. Howarth will find much support for his criticisms.—J. C. W. C., Tulse Hill.

(290) **Beltona Records.**—I have the Beltona list before me and should like to know whether Pipe-Major Jas. Robertson makes bagpipes tolerably pleasant or comprehensible; what the Glasgow Orpheus Choir (against which are the names of Holst, Vaughan Williams, and Boughton) are like, or the Welsh Quartettes, or the Scots songs, or the Accordion solos.—E. W. W., Oxford.

(291) **Loud Machines.**—Do you know of any article published that deals with *loud* sound-producing machines, the Auxetophone, etc.?—J. P. G., Oldham.

(292) **Best Record Wanted.**—Two hymn tunes, sung by church choir and accompanied by organ.—A. R., Abbey, Leeds.

(293) **Record Wanted.**—"Coronach, a Highland Lament," arranged A. W. Ketelbey, written by Edgar Barratt. Is it on any of the Gramophone Company's records?—R. E. S., Birmingham.

(294) **The Ninth Symphony.**—What is the number of the American Vocalion record which supplies the sections missing from the last movement of the Parlophone issue of Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony"?—J. T. C. K., Belfast.

(295) **Sound-boxes.**—Could you kindly tell me the name of a first-class sound-box giving the deepest tone to any record played with it.—G. C. F. B., Dublin.

(296) **"Ad hoc!"**—The members of the South London Gramophone Society are to be congratulated on their discovery of a new *Brindisi* of Schubert's, "Hoch, hoch die lierch" (page 355, February). My dictionary does not give "lierch"; it is possibly an old drinking vessel.—H. E. A., Braintree.

[The responsibility for this travesty of "Horch, Horch, die Lerch" does not, unfortunately, lie outside the London Office.—Ed.]



ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Will readers please notice particularly that answers should be written on *separate* slips. Will they also overcome a tendency to keep silence when they could help a fellow-reader by answering his query.—Ed.]

(250) **Brahms' "Quartet in A minor."**—This is the record Mr. Compton Mackenzie recommended to those unfortunate mortals unaware of Brahms. I should imagine your ear or your copy of it are at fault. There are five grooves before the playing commences, which does not convey the impression of a premature start. The only defect I can see in this record is that it is badly cut. This quartet is unfortunate, as the Vocalion version on four sides is also badly cut. Here is a chance for Parlophone to give the Eweler String Quartet something to do to occupy eight sides, thereabouts.—J. C. W. C., Tulse Hill.

(251) **Best Records Wanted.**—*Frieda Hempel*: "Infelice sconsolata" ("Flauto Magico") is the best soprano record I have ever heard (H.M.V. D.B.331. Reverse: "Aria" from "Ratto dal Seraglio"). D.A.248 is also excellent. *Frank Mullings*: His "Thou avast thee" ("Othello") is the best rendering of this aria available on the gramophone. The trial songs from "Meistersinger" are also good in a very different style. (Columbia: L.1349—his "Celeste Aida" on the reverse is terrifying—and L.1576.) All his "Othello" records are good.—A. M. G. B., W. 8.

(252) **Records Wanted.**—There are some excellent examples of good recordings on Zonophone records: (a) "Mountain Lovers," sung by Harold Wilde, Zono. No. 753; (b) "Home to our Mountains" duet, Mme. Violetta and E. Pike, Zono. G.O.2; (c) "Good-bye" (Tosti), sung by Joseph Hislop, Zono. A.154.—V. L., S.W. 9.

(253) **"Marche Indienne."**—With regard to T. W.'s enquiry (p. 451, April issue), the "Marche Indienne" referred to is probably from Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots." The march is to be found in Emile Gasan's arrangement from this opera, but whether it can be obtained in record form is beyond my knowledge.—F. C., Huddersfield.

(258) **"Marche Indienne."**—The record of the "Marche Indienne," played by the band of the 1st Battalion King's (Liverpool) Regiment, conducted by Bandmaster G. Passelow, with the "Champion March" on the reverse side will be found in the Imperial catalogue, No. 1165, 10in., 2s. This record was described by Captain Barnett in Vol. II., No. 1, p. 16, as "Out of the common rut."—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(258) **"Marche Indienne."**—This is by Sellenick and the only record I know of it is Edison Recreation, No. 50995, played by Creator and his band. It is a magnificent record in every way and being a fairly recent issue the surface is good.—W. A. C.

[A. J. J., Chichester, J. M., Sheffield, and others confirm; V. H. B., Exeter, adds H.M.V. Dutch list, No. W.12, played by the Garde Républicaine Band, and Victor 35258, 12in., played by Kyril's Bohemian Band; and it is also in the Pathé catalogue (6140).—Ed.]

(263) **Record Wanted.**—Jean Nolan sings "The Meeting of the Waters" on Vocalion X.9164.—F. L., Rathmines.

(266) **Best Record Wanted.**—The best record of the "Bohemian Girl Overture" (Balfe) is the Zonophone record by the Black Diamonds Band—12in., No. A.247, 4s. This is the very best version in my opinion. As it occupies two sides of the record it is not "cut" to any great extent.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(267) **Title wanted.**—The title of the song heard by J. E. S., Hammersmith, is "Daffodil Gold," charmingly sung by Walter Glynn on H.M.V. B.1304, with "On Billow Rocking" on reverse equally good.—S. A. S., Ilford.

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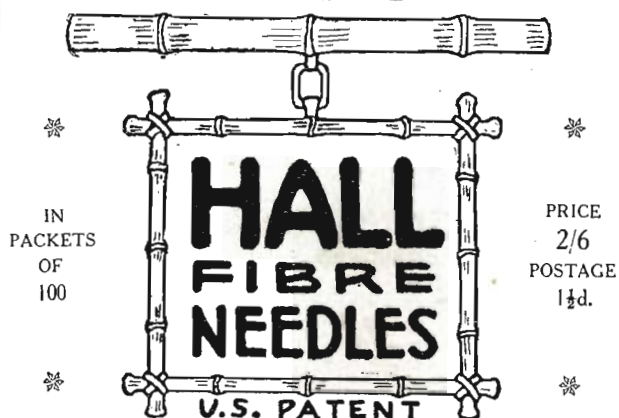
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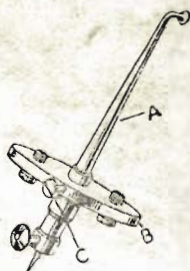
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